

BY THE PUBLISHERS OF

**GOLF
WORLD**

TOP 100 GOLF COURSES IN CONTINENTAL EUROPE 2015/16

The most authoritative ranking by the most widely-travelled panel.

NEW NAMES

Seven courses come in... so which big names miss out?

SECOND CENTURY

A rigorous refresh of the 'Next 100' – plus a focus on the key contenders

WIN
A DREAM BREAK
AT A TOP 100
RESORT

EXCLUSIVE INSIGHT LANGER, JACKLIN, MOLINARI, OLAZABAL, HAVRET & COORE

Cover image: Nicklaus Design Legend Course, Penati Golf Resort, Slovakia

WELCOME



Our knowledge of the courses of Continental Europe has expanded a bit like it has with regard to footballers. Two decades ago, before every World

Cup there was great excitement at watching for the first time the latest striker to play for Brazil or the new star in Italy's midfield. Now these players are on our screens at least once a week.

The same is true of Continental golf courses. When we first started compiling these lists, I suspect only a few of you will have been familiar with more than a handful of names. The proliferation of media and golf travel means you will now have heard of over half at least.

I like to think this means this biennial ranking has increased in importance and interest in the past 20 years. But even if you are not desperately eager to find out what has come in/dropped out/moved up /moved down, hopefully you find interest and insight in the 60+ pages that follow.

None of us will ever agree on a Top 100 ranking of course, but what I can say without fear of contradiction is this is the most thoroughly-researched Continental Top 100 we have ever produced.

In previous lists we have relied broadly on the contributions of correspondents in each country. While these remain, we have a second layer of assessment; input from golfers who have played widely across many countries. I am one of those

fortunate to have done so and am joined by a group of other similarly well-travelled panellists (right). I thank them for their efforts in helping mould this list, which we believe is the most authoritative you will find by virtue of the panel's ability to compare courses across several countries.

So, for every course, we have a verdict from an expert based in the country to which it belongs and also from a panellist (often panellists) who has played across many countries. [NB No panellist commented on their 'home' course]

We don't have anyone who has played all 100, as we do in our GB&I lists, but we are getting close. Clearly, it is a significant undertaking to play everywhere from Lykia Links to Hardelot (Les Pins).

I hope you enjoy discovering our refreshed ranking and look forward to your views on our selections. I hope we have played a part in highlighting to you the finest courses in Continental Europe – all 200 of them in fact, including our enhanced 'Next 100' – as you weigh up your golf breaks for 2016 and beyond.

I especially hope when you play the courses, what you experience matches up with what we suggest you will encounter.

Chris Bertram
Top 100 Editor

THE 2015 PANEL

Chris Bertram Golf World's Courses & Travel editor has played 65 of the Top 100.

Borje Laurinsson With wife Gunnel, this Swedish couple have played our Top 100 courses with real devotion!

Hans-Joachim Walter A German with a French home, he's an expert on both.

Nigel Butler and wife **Suzanne** are separate panellists. In 2002 these Brussels-based golfers set up Where2Golf.com, covering 4,000 of the world's best courses on five continents, aiming to provide a wealth of information on 'the best'.

Peter Bjerkeseth Widely-travelled Norwegian with expertise in Scandinavia.

Peter Gammie A particular font of knowledge in his new home of France, plus Spain.

Country-by-country panel: Spain, Juan Lozano; Portugal, Joao Vieira Pereira; Denmark, Thomas Vennekilde; France, Jean-Francois Bosse; Sweden, Tommy Jeppsson & Olle Dahlgren; Germany, Heinz Knebel; Netherlands, Ruben van der Zaag; Finland & Estonia, Teemu Tyru; Switzerland, Franco Carabelli.

- Their initials will precede all their contributions.

Cover image: Penati (Heritage)



El Prat (Rosa), one of our Spanish entries.

EXCLUSIVE

7 TO PLAY IN ITALY

By Francesco Molinari



From beautiful parkland courses to classic links, Italy has great golf for all tastes.

1 Biella is traditional course, up in the hills, with beautiful scenery. Not the longest by modern standards, but still a very good course.

2 Royal Park near to Turin is actually very close to where I grew up, and I played it a few times when I was younger. It's a classical parkland course, a bit longer and a bit wider than Biella, it staged the Italian Open a few years ago.

3 Villa d'Este near to Como, again in the hills, has beautiful views of the 'Lake District'. It's tree-lined, very tight with small fairways. It's a little short for modern tournament golf, but a great layout for amateurs.

4 Castelconturbia is a parkland course that is a little bit flatter and wider than Villa d'Este and Biella. There are two courses, both good. Probably more lakes than the others on the list, but a very good course.

5 Golf Nazionale in Rome is a bit more open compared to the others. It can get quite windy there and is therefore a tough test at times. It's not so tree-lined though, but kept in very good condition.

6 Bogogno The Bonora has lots of water hazards and is a bit longer golf course. The fairways are generous but you still have to drive the ball well. If you miss the fairways, you are in big trouble. The other course, Del Conte, is shorter, a bit easier, but it did host stage one of the Q School so is still a good standard of course.

7 Circolo Golf Torino is close to Royal Park and is where I played growing up. It has hosted the Italian Open the past two years. It's tree-lined and older, but new tees make it a good test.

■ **Turin-born Francesco Molinari is a top-50 player and has played in two Ryder Cups.**



100

Aroeira 1 NEW ENTRY
Lisbon, Portugal

+351 212 979 110, aroeira.com.

Par 72, 6,648 yards. Frank Pennink.

CB Laid out in two loops of nine, Aroeira 1 was dubbed the 'Wentworth of Lisbon' in the '80s but has in truth more of a feel of Woburn. It enjoyably winds between towering pine trees yet is never claustrophobic.

GW VERDICT A delightful experience on a course in peak condition, Aroeira's presence in this Top 100 is a reward for recent upgrades.



99 The Dutch (▼12)

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

+31 883 399 120, thedutch.nl. Par 72, 7,174 yards. Colin Montgomerie/EGD.

CB A real triumph for it to stay in the Top 100 because locals insist the site was very modest. What the pros do on this skilfully-manufactured course in the 2016 KLM Open will be interesting. GW VERDICT Strong layout incorporating undulating mounding, lakes, streams, canals, penal run-offs and tiered greens.



98 Montgomerie Maxx NEW ENTRY

Belek, Turkey

+242 710 2700. Par 72, 7,134 yards. Colin Montgomerie/EGD.

PG Very entertaining. Intriguing 9th and 18th. Some housing encroachment but in great condition and a Top 100 course for me. GW VERDICT Another Monty/EGD design, this time with Gary Johnston. In superb nick and outwith the odd short 8th, it is consistently high calibre. Probably an overdue Top 100 elevation.



97 Hossegor (▼7)

Landes, France

+33 558 435 699, golfhossegor.com. Par 71, 6,568 yards. Morrison/Robinson.

PG Very attractive as you think your way through the pines. Definitely a Top 100 course and could move up for my money.

CB A lovely English-feeling parkland course.

GW VERDICT Lacks the stand-out holes or scenery of others but a very pleasant, tranquil all-round test to this under-stated club's course.



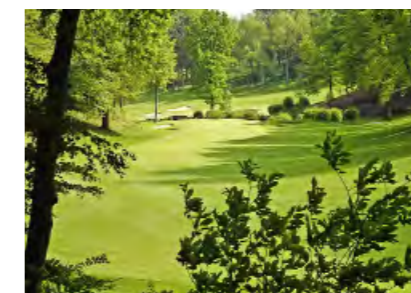
96 Royal Antwerp (▼6)

Antwerp, Belgium

+32 366 68456, ragc.be. Par 73, 6,780 yards. Park/Simpson.

NB Belgium's oldest golf club started life in 1888 and plays over relatively flat terrain so while it is easy walking it provides challenge in the bunkering, trees and fast greens.

GW VERDICT Quietly exudes charm and character, Royal Antwerp has maintained a presence in our Top 100 for good reason.



95 Royal Waterloo NEW ENTRY

Brussels, Belgium

royalwaterloogolfclub.be, +32 2633 1850. Par 73, 6,925 yards. Hawtree.

NB La Marache is a rolling mix of open and tree-lined parkland holes. Hawtree's 2010 renovation introduced top-quality greens and surrounds. 9th and 18th are fabulous closing holes.

GW VERDICT La Marache is testing, immaculate and with no two holes the same. Hints of St George's Hill and Worplesdon to a Belgian jewel.



94 Linna (►)

Hameenlinna, Finland

+35 836 102 600, linnagolf.fi. Par 72, 6,624 yards. Tim Lobb.

TT This idyllic course offers a great variety of beautiful landscapes. The course is built on Vanajanlinna Manor grounds and takes full advantage of the splendid old woods.

GW VERDICT Noted for its conditioning and beauty, although there are some modest holes there are also plenty of excellent ones too.



LUKE DONALD

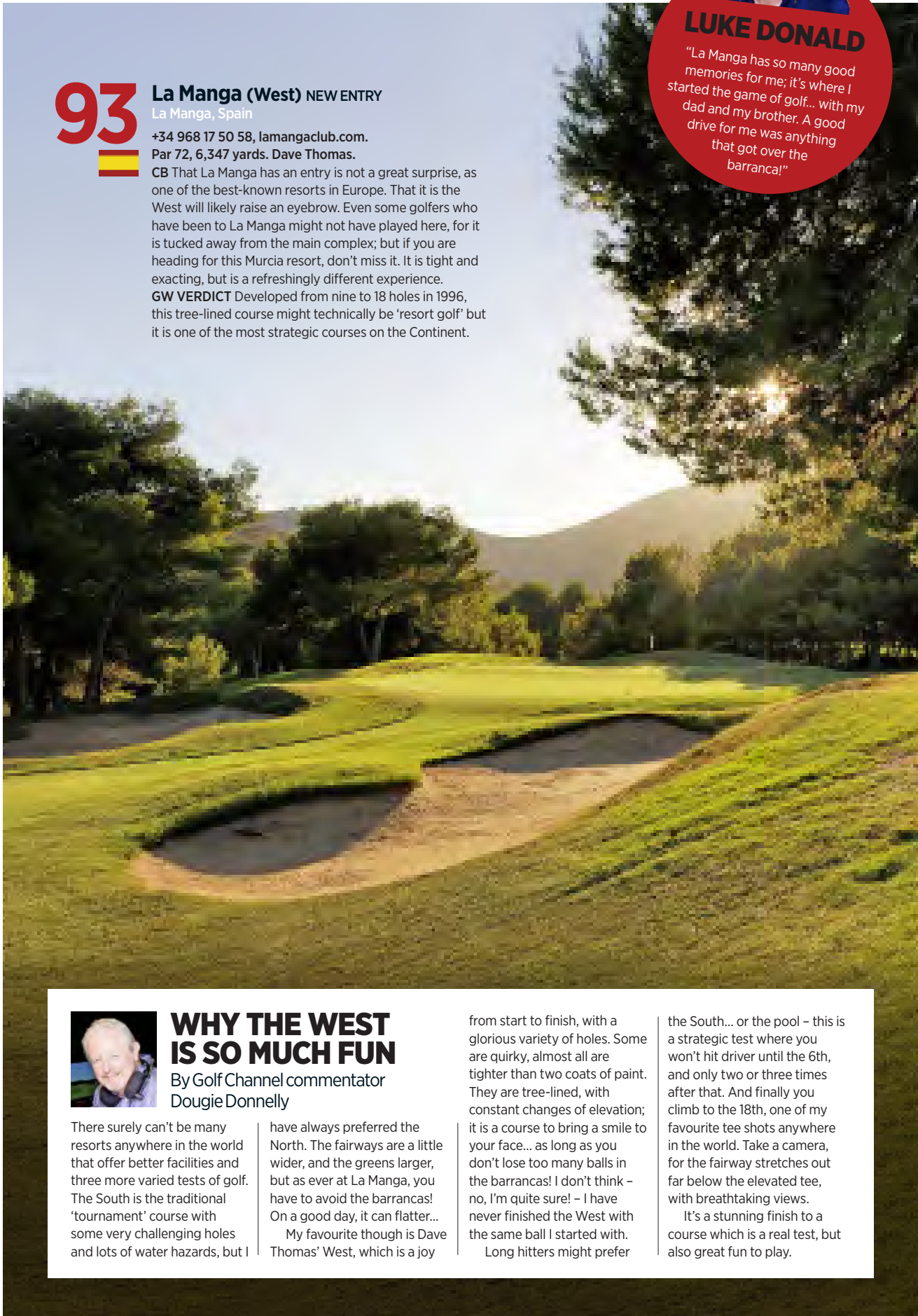
"La Manga has so many good memories for me; it's where I started the game of golf... with my dad and my brother. A good drive for me was anything that got over the barranca!"

93 La Manga (West) NEW ENTRY

La Manga, Spain
 +34 968 17 50 58, lamangaclub.com.
 Par 72, 6,347 yards. Dave Thomas.



CB That La Manga has an entry is not a great surprise, as one of the best-known resorts in Europe. That it is the West will likely raise an eyebrow. Even some golfers who have been to La Manga might not have played here, for it is tucked away from the main complex; but if you are heading for this Murcia resort, don't miss it. It is tight and exacting, but is a refreshingly different experience. **GW VERDICT** Developed from nine to 18 holes in 1996, this tree-lined course might technically be 'resort golf' but it is one of the most strategic courses on the Continent.



WHY THE WEST IS SO MUCH FUN

By Golf Channel commentator Dougie Donnelly

There surely can't be many resorts anywhere in the world that offer better facilities and three more varied tests of golf. The South is the traditional 'tournament' course with some very challenging holes and lots of water hazards, but I


have always preferred the North. The fairways are a little wider, and the greens larger, but as ever at La Manga, you have to avoid the barrancas! On a good day, it can flatter... My favourite though is Dave Thomas' West, which is a joy

from start to finish, with a glorious variety of holes. Some are quirky, almost all are tighter than two coats of paint. They are tree-lined, with constant changes of elevation; it is a course to bring a smile to your face... as long as you don't lose too many balls in the barrancas! I don't think – no, I'm quite sure! – I have never finished the West with the same ball I started with. Long hitters might prefer

the South... or the pool – this is a strategic test where you won't hit driver until the 6th, and only two or three times after that. And finally you climb to the 18th, one of my favourite tee shots anywhere in the world. Take a camera, for the fairway stretches out far below the elevated tee, with breathtaking views. It's a stunning finish to a course which is a real test, but also great fun to play.




92 Quinta do Lago (North) NEW ENTRY
Algarve, Portugal

 +351 289 394 911, quintadolago.com. Par 72, 6,776 yards. Welling/McGinley. JVP The redesign by Beau Welling with the help of Paul McGinley has transformed a good course into a challenging one. You will want to play it more than once – I can assure you of that. GW VERDICT A new entry for a course totally revamped to great effect. Playable and pretty, it may well end up superceding its sister (South).




89 Oceanico Faldo (▼23)
Algarve, Portugal

 +351 289 310 333, oceanicogolf.com. Par 72, 7,215 yards. Sir Nick Faldo. CB Part of the Amendoeira resort, this stringent Faldo design is a well-conditioned, well-designed test. But the seriously undulating back nine is no place to be battling on a steamy Algarve day. PBe Wide fairways and I find low excitement. GW VERDICT Patently a 'proper' course but this list broadly favours enjoyment over challenge.




87 Moliets (▲10)
Landes, France

 +33 558 485 465, golfmoliets.com. Par 72, 6,750 yards. Robert Trent Jones Snr. PG Long walks between holes, but worth it. Definitely a Top 100 course. CB A rarity on the Continent in that it possesses holes we would recognise as being genuinely links in character. Decent inland sections too. GW VERDICT The handful of holes over sandy linkland by the sea are absolutely terrific.




91 San Roque (Old) (▲5)
Sotogrande, Spain

 +34 956 613 030, sanroqueclub.com. Par 72, 7,101 yards. Dave Thomas. CB A classic name and a classic test among mature woodland and over rolling parkland. Water adds spice on a back nine which ends excitingly in front of the stately clubhouse. GW VERDICT A little rise for the Old, which is very solid if unspectacular. The tough-as-teak New was close to joining it in the 100 too.




88 Winston Golf (Champ) (▲7)
Schwerin, Germany

 +49 3860 5020, winstongolf.com. Par 72, 7,194 yards. David Krause. H-JW Winston is really something special, albeit very artificial. It is not up there with your Kingsbarns or Castle Stuart but it is quite an adventure, a completely artificial links with some dramatic contours, sometimes exaggerated. GW VERDICT Built on the old vegetable fields of King Ludwig XIV. One to say 'I played there'.



86 Holstebro (Forest) (▼1)
Holstebro, Denmark

 +45 97 48 51 55, holstebro-golfklub.dk. Par 72, 6,464 yards. Eric Schnack. TV A truly testing course where every hole is beautifully surrounded by trees. GW VERDICT Holds its position in the 80s after debuting in 2011 as a result of the tranquility of this woodland-heathland layout in the north west corner of Denmark. An enjoyable, neat layout by Eric Schnack.

90 Penati (Heritage) NEW ENTRY
Bratislava, Slovakia



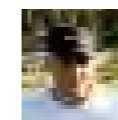
+421 917 907 777, penatigolfresort.sk. Par 72, 6,853 yards. Jonathan Davison. CB Two very strong courses here but this is the one I preferred. The Legend is consistently jaw-dropping but the Heritage charms more. Some classic traditional design features in a course that has the best back nine on the property. GW VERDICT The youngest of the courses at Penati is the first to debut in the Top 100, and what's more the one without the superstar name on the design deeds. Don't be surprised to see the Legend (by Nicklaus) join the Heritage in future list.



EXCLUSIVE

AN ENGLISHMAN AT HOME IN BRATISLAVA

Jonathan Davison, who hails from Whitburn in north-east England, explains why Penati was his dream job.



I visited the site in 2007 when the Nicklaus course was half complete. I was totally blown away – it reminded me of old photos of Pine Valley. It was just pure sand everywhere and by far the best site I'd seen, comparable to courses by the likes of Doak and Coore.

Sand helps shaping and drainage so much, and add in bits of heather, pines and rolling topography and it's very special. I wanted to do something completely different to the Nicklaus course. It took a while to convince the clients, purely because they'd never really seen many traditional-style courses. We wanted to retain as many as

possible of the natural features and I thought the resort would offer more interest to have two courses which varied in style and in playing qualities. But I did question my style and methods many times during construction: was it the right course for a new market and especially for golfers who have probably never visited the Surrey heathlands?

We wanted to have more movement around the greens for more short-game creativity. And a few semi-blind shots can be found to give a different strategy and traditional charm. Harry Colt is always an influence on my work. I love the movement around his greens and his par 3s are always stand outs – we tried to do the same on the Heritage.

84 Costa Navarino (Dunes) (►)

Messinia, Greece

+30 272 309 0200, costanavarino.com. Par 72, 6,800 yards. Bernhard Langer/EGD. CB A top-drawer resort – just make sure you fly to Kalamata (45 minutes away) from Gatwick or it is a three-hour drive from Athens. That aside, it is wonderful, and the Dunes is the pick of the two courses... although the Bay would also be worthy too. **GW VERDICT** The toughest and arguably best holes at this 36-hole resort are on the Dunes' front nine. Fabulous views of Navarino Bay and when the clubhouse arrives the course will start at the present 13th hole taking you straight down towards the Bay.

EXCLUSIVE

MY PRIDE AT THE DUNES COURSE

Bernhard Langer tells GW of his satisfaction as he returns to Costa Navarino for the first time since his design opened.



The original owner, Vassilis Constantakopoulos, who everyone knew as 'The Captain', really impressed me. He wanted to create a great resort for the future in his own land. Working with Ross McMurray, we understood we

were creating a resort course – that is not necessarily the same as a championship course.

We wanted somewhere everyone could play and enjoy, whether a beginner or a well-established player, and provide a challenge for them both. I think that we did a really good job.

It looks beautiful and the

fairways are fairly generous. We also knew that there was always a breeze here, which is good when you are playing in these warm conditions.

But we worked with that on the course and built some large greens because we all know when it is windy distance control is not easy; so everyone can play

it and have fun. And most of all it is such a beautiful piece of property with some of the ocean views you get from the course. We wanted to use what nature had provided us with and use the wonderful old olive trees and those views.

We did not have to produce much, because it was all there.



85 Estonia G&CC (►)

Tallinn, Estonia

+372 6098 241, egcc.ee. Par 72, 7,066 yards. Lassi Pekka Tilander.

TT Deserves a Top 100 spot but now under threat as the No.1 in Estonia from a new course... (see Next 100 for details)

GW VERDICT Unfortunate to stand still but only does so because of sparkling new entries and that others have risen so markedly. Opened in 2005 it enjoys a majestic forest/coast setting.



81 Kytaja (South East) (▼5)

Hyvinkää, Finland

+358 194 565 700, golfpiste.com. Par 71, 6,965 yards. Thomas McBroom.

TT Represents modern North American golf course architecture at its best. Wide fairways, all-encompassing shaping of surface areas, and the strong contrasts in the overall colour scheme make each round a vivid experience.

GW VERDICT Always naturally beautiful, now resisting northern weather conditions all year.



78 Las Colinas (▼6)

Alicante, Spain

+34 965 324 224, aworldapart.es. Par 71, 7,014 yards. Cabell B Robinson.

CB A relatively new course that opened just five years ago but has settled well into its surroundings near Alicante. Tough off the backs.

GW VERDICT Part of a resort and residential complex but this Troon-managed resort manages to retain a nice air of peacefulness in its wooded valley.



83 St Nom La Breteche (Red) (▼17)

Paris, France

+33 130 800 440, golfdesaintnomlabreteche.com. Par 72, 6,850 yards. F Hawtree.

CB Routed through mature trees and over rolling parkland in 1959, there are many elevated tees to aid enjoyment of the wooded countryside. Long-time host of the Lancome Trophy as well as the last Seve Trophy.

GW VERDICT Delightful undulating parkland and woodland track on the western suburbs of Paris.



80 Thracian Cliffs (▼2)

Kavarna, Bulgaria

+359 58 510 550, thraciancliffs.com. Par 72, 7,108 yards. Gary Player.

Nick Wright (GW Editor): It is all about the vistas, with every hole offering a sea view. The serenity of the Black Sea is relaxing and enchanting. Often visually dramatic but not excessively difficult.

GW VERDICT Technical design squeezed by amazing cliff-top location, but is a 'must play'. Could hop up list if conditioning rises a notch.



77 Crans sur Sierre (▼7)

Crans-Montana, Switzerland

+27 485 9797, golfcrans.ch. Par 72, 6,975 yards. Harry Nicholson/Seve Ballesteros.

FC Re-designed by Severiano Ballesteros, due to its spectacular views on the alps (1500m above sea level) and the fact it is the only regular stop of the European Tour in Switzerland. Adjacent nine-hole course was designed by Jack Nicklaus.

GW VERDICT Something special whether bathed in sunshine or coated in snow.



82 Steiermarkischer (▼5)

Murhof, Austria

+43 3126 3010, murhof.at. Par 72, 6,918 yards. Dr von Limburger, Michael Pinner.

CB Rather like Crans-sur-Sierre, the setting of 'Murhof – an hour's drive north of Graz – is everything, a breathtaking mountain backdrop beyond the trees.

GW Laid out in 1963 by Dr von Limburger, a refresh by Michael Pinner ensured this gorgeous setting has got the strategic course it merits.



79 Las Brisas (▲5)

Andalucia, Spain

+34 956 785 252, realclubdegolfasbrisas.com. Par 72, 6,415 yards. RTJ Snr/Phillips.

CB The star of the heavily-populated Marbella area, Las Brisas has always impressed with its variety of holes and flora and fauna.

GW VERDICT Kyle Phillips has overhauled the course nine by nine, and so far the results are predictably impressive. Expect a full report in 2016 – and a move into the top 50 in 2017?



76 La Reserva de Sotogrande (▲13)

Sotogrande, Spain

+34 956 785 252, sotogrande.es. Par 72, 7,350 yards. Cabell B Robinson.


CB Offers one of the best varieties of hole in Spain and deserves its place alongside the big names of Sotogrande. A new course and a very welcome addition to the Costa del Sol.

GW VERDICT One of Cabell Robinson's best; a challenging and long course with clever green designs and exceptional maintenance.



75 Abama (▼19)

Tenerife, Spain

 +34 922 126 000, abamahotelresort.com. Par 72, 6,899 yards. Dave Thomas.


CB Near the bustling Las Americas resort in Tenerife is an oasis of serenity, an immaculately-manicured course with fabulous views of the Atlantic from its hilltop position. Seriously slick, multi-tiered greens will entertain/infuriate.

GW VERDICT Not popular with all but its beauty, conditioning and views see it slot into the 70s.



74 Cornelia (Prince) (▲17)

Belek, Turkey

 +90 242 710 600, corneliagolfresort.com. Par 72, 6,916 yards. Sir Nick Faldo.


CB One of Sir Nick Faldo's finest designs in my view. Some typically strategic questions but also some cool sporty holes that give you a chance.

GW VERDICT A significant rise for the second Belek course in the list, all the loops here are impressive and this could easily not be Cornelia's peak in the Top 100 rankings.



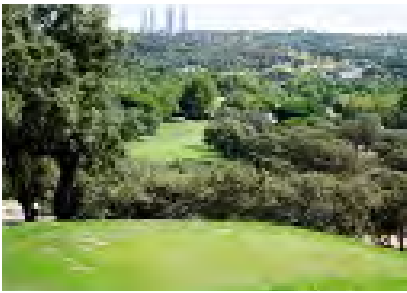
73 Fontana (▲3)

Oberwaltersdorf, Austria

 +43 2253 606 2204, fontana.at. Par 72, 7,097 yards. Doug Carrick & Hans Erhard.


CB Glorious lake-and-pines setting is matched by a course well routed by respected Canadian architect Doug Carrick.

GW VERDICT A very strong Ryder Cup candidate course for 2022, this super parkland is located to the south of Vienna and has been a popular host of the European and Challenge Tour.



72 Villa de Madrid (Black) (▼8)

Madrid, Spain

 +34 915 502 010, clubvillademadrid.com. Par 71, 6,610 yards. Javier Arana.


JAL This is another great Javier Arana design that never loses its class.

GW VERDICT As we reported last month, this neat parkland is under threat from local government, even though it is a popular course catering for hundreds of golfers per week. Perhaps you should get there while you can...



71 Chiberta (▼19)

Landes, France

 +33 559 525 110, golfchiberta.com. Par 70, 6,178 yards. Tom Simpson.

PG The opening and closing holes are a disappointment, and the links-like holes in between are a mixed bunch. But still Top 100.


PBe A bit too highly rated compared to several other French courses such as Saint Endreol.

GW VERDICT Chiberta has olde world charm in both the chic hotel and the seaside holes.



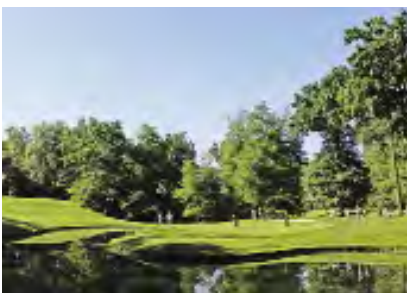
70 Puerto de Hierro (Arriba) (▼10)

Madrid, Spain

 +34 913 161 745, rcphierro.com. Par 73, 6,944 yards. Simpson/Colt/Phillips.


JAL One of the oldest clubs in Spain – and there is a great Trent Jones redesign for the neighbouring 'Abajo' course too.

GW VERDICT A frequent host of the Madrid Open, some prefer the Abajo but the Arriba enjoys more favour with our panel. A classy parkland with enormous pedigree.



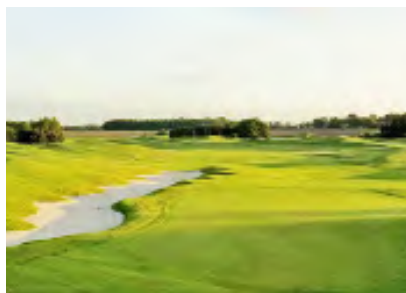
69 Castelconturbia (▼11)

Via Suno, Italy.

 +39 322 832 596, castelconturbia.it. Par 72, 6,812 yards. Robert Trent Jones Snr.


NB Set in an undulating woodland environment, this big-dimension roaming layout has several elevated tees looking down on pleasantly tree-lined fairways. The par-5 9th on the Red is actually arguably the best of the closing holes.

GW Of its 27 holes we select the Blue and Yellow nines for our entry. RTJ trademarks abound.



68 Vasatorps (Tour) (▼8)

Helsingborg, Sweden

 +46 42 235 058, vasatorpsgk.se. Par 72, 7,369 yards. Arthur Hills & Steve Forrest.

OD Less than 10 years old, it is a true challenge. Has links character but also with wooded phases. It changes with the seasons and the weather.

TJ The LET visited last year and, like green fee guests, players had only positive things to say.

GW VERDICT Rolling fairways and undulating greens, it is always in good condition.



67 Neguri (▼2)

Algorta, Spain

 +34 944 910 200, rsgolfneguri.com. Par 72, 6,867 yards. Javier Arana.

JAL Outstanding Javier Arana design. Exceptional sea views from the Spanish northern coast. One the oldest and more prestigious private clubs in Spain.

GW VERDICT Currently benefiting from Frank Pont's nous, this parkland-cliff-top sits on the edge of the Bay of Biscay on Bilbao's outskirts.



66 Le Touquet (La Mer) (▼15)
Pas de Calais, France

FR +33 321 062 800, opengolfclub.com. Par 72, 6,862 yards. Colt/Pont.
PG Great fun. Work going on to reinstate some holes to original design. Inside top 50 for me.
GW VERDICT Drops significantly and we believe it is a fair assessment of a seaside course that has lost its sparkle... but with Frank Pont and Patrice Boissonnas now overhauling it, we fully expect it to go past its former high of No.51 in 2017.



63 Halmstad (North) (▼11)
Halmstad, Sweden

SE +46 35 176 801, hgk.se. Par: 72, 6,908 yards. Sundblom, Sköld & Pennick.
TJ The host of the 2011 European Championships is a Swedish classic that never has a bad season.
PBe OK, but I'm never so fascinated with it.
GW VERDICT The 2007 Solheim Cup host is routed on undulating terrain through mature pines that are close to the coast. A terrific finish helps it to a position in the low 60s.



61 Esbjerg (▲1)
Jutland, Denmark

DK +45 7526 9219, egk.dk. Par 71, 6,952 yards. Frederik Dreyer.
TV A challenging seaside course, where the wind will make you work for your score.
GW VERDICT Esbjerg suffered a little drop in 2013's re-ranking but this heathland-feeling coastal course deserves its spot up slightly to No.61. One of Denmark's best and we look forward to explaining more about it in 2016.



65 Bled (King's) (▼16)
Bled, Slovenia

SI +386 453 77 711, golfbled.com. Par 73, 6,841 yards. Donald Harradine.
CB Magical location – one of the best in this list.
GW VERDICT The owners, members of some of the world's finest clubs, are determined to make this a truly special place. So the Kings is in flux, being totally overhauled by Howard Swan while maintaining the original's integrity. Like No.66 Le Touquet, its 2017 position will be interesting.



62 Limburg (▲11)
Houthalen, Belgium

BE +32 89 38 3543, lgcc.be. Par 72, 6,679 yards. Fred Hawtree.
NB Like a classic Surrey-Berkshire heathland, it roams through a mix of mature birch and pines, as well as more open areas, where large expanses of heather wait for wayward drives.
BL Really liked Limburg, a natural layout that reminds one of Sunningdale.
GW VERDICT One of Europe's best heathlands.



60 Verdura (East) (►)
Sciaccia, Sicily

IT +39 092 599 8001, verduraresort.com. Par 72, 7,354 yards. Kyle Phillips.
CB Super clifftop/parkland golf laid out with élan by Kyle Phillips on the distinctive Sicilian terrain.
GW Stays constant despite some concerns over how what Phillips left has developed. The East's routing and setting deserves this spot though – and the West (also by Phillips), as can happen with No.2 courses, may be unlucky to miss out.

64 Carya, Belek, Turkey (▲35)
Belek, Turkey



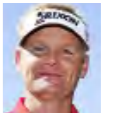
+90 242 725 6320, caryagolf.com.
Par 72, 7,186 yards. Thomson, Perrett & Lobb.
CB Classy course in Belek that combines genuine heathland phases with those more parkland in nature. It is very much to be hoped the owners maintain not only the improved conditioning but also the heathland sections as they set it apart from everything else in Belek (and beyond).
GW VERDICT A huge rise... but it could have been bigger. An assessment in 2014 suggested a top-40 slot but a further check in 2015 revealed some alterations to some holes that didn't especially appeal. Still excellent though.



EXCLUSIVE

3 DANISH DELIGHTS

By Soren Kjeldsen



Denmark's best-known courses in tend to be of the heathland-type that you find in

Surrey and Berkshire. There are plenty of them – including Holstebro and Esjberg which feature in this list – but the three courses below are up there with them for enjoyment.

1 The Scandanvian

I am a member at this 36-hole club near Farum, north of Copenhagen. I think the New is the better of the two courses – I seem to play it more anyway. It is probably a little harder, so you tend to find more golfers playing the Old!

Both courses are world class though, with more dog-legs on the Old, whereas the New is generally the straighter. The clubhouse is an architectural masterpiece. You would never see a clubhouse like that anywhere else. Denmark has a proud history of architecture.

The Scandanvian could easily host a modern championships – and it is the one place in Denmark where they do spend a lot of money on their courses.

2 Hvide Klit is an amazing golf course close to Skagen. It's also very close to where I'm from. When I retire, I want to buy and build a hotel next to the course. All that's needed here is a little bit of money. There are a lot of trees like you get close to the sea, and a few dunes too.


3 Læsø is a fantastic course with a linksy feel to it, although nine holes are in the trees. My coach is the teaching pro here. I didn't really expect it to be as good as it was because I hadn't heard of it until recently – and I'm Danish! The course is a bit like Hvide Klit in that it is close to the sea but not right next to it. From a layout standpoint, it is world class, it just needs a little money spent on it to make it spectacular.

■ Soren Kjeldsen is the Irish Open champion and has 500 European Tour appearances to his name – only another Top 100 contributor, Peter Baker, reached the landmark quicker.



59 Kongsvinger (▲8)

Granli, Norway

 kongsvingersgolfklubb.no. +47 906 29 200. Par 72, 6,912 yards. P Nordwall.


PBe Gives you challenges, excitement, beauty and a wide variety of good holes. You can play it day after day and have new challenges every time. Much better than several top-50 courses.

GW Our highest new entry in 2013 moves up nicely, confirmation this woodland course is well worthy of its place among the continental elite.



58 Quinta do Lago (South) (▼5)

Almancil, Portugal

 +351 289 390 705, quintadolagogolf.com. Par 72, 7,100 yards. William Mitchell.

JVP Outstanding layout in one of the most well-known resorts in Algarve. The views are wonderful and the pine trees make the difference in an accessible golf course.

GW VERDICT Host of the Portuguese Open on eight occasions, it is a championship challenge with aesthetic appeal and is still QdL's No.1.



56 Antalya (PGA Sultan) (▲7)

Belek, Turkey

 +90 242 725 5970, agc.com.tr. Par 71, 7,083 yards. David Jones.

CB You will struggle to find a better-conditioned championship course on the Continent. Tough, yet still highly enjoyable, and with nice variation.

GW VERDICT The venue that put Belek on the map with the Turkish Airlines World Golf Finals was one of the first to be built in this corner of Turkey... and it remains one of the strongest.

57 Royal Obidos (▲25)

Obidos, Portugal

+351 262 965 220, royalobidosgolf.com.

Par 72, 7,300 yards. Seve Ballesteros.



CB Lots of super holes offering different kinds of tests, with the common theme a feeling this was a job done correctly in every sense. Barely two years old too, so it is only going to keep getting better.

GW VERDICT Sure-footed progress up the ranking following its entry in 2013, Royal Obidos is every inch the modern championship course. Oozes quality.



EXCLUSIVE

“SPECTACULAR... AND TERRIFIC PAR 3S”

Course designer Alex Hay assesses Royal Obidos, the new course north of Lisbon on the cusp of the top 50.



From the moment I arrived at Royal Obidos I knew I would enjoy the day. There was a very relaxed atmosphere in the clubhouse buzzing with golfers and the coffee tasted great while taking in the views of the

golf course and spectacular surrounding scenery. After reaching sufficient caffeine levels I hit some balls on the range with hire clubs far better than my own set and then headed to the 1st tee. I enjoyed the course immensely but don't be fooled by the

relatively large greens; hitting the right club is key to scoring well here and with a couple of blind drives, those who have played the course will definitely have the advantage in a game. I particularly enjoyed the terrific par 3s. Three of the five are heavily influenced by water

and if you are anything like me you will use the bailout areas wisely! In hindsight I wish I had done this more often on the rest of the course as I found myself fishing for balls on more than one occasion...

■ **Alex Hay is design associate with European Golf Design.**

THE VERDICT FROM THE INSIDE

We asked five exceptionally well-travelled industry experts for their views on the Continent's leading courses.

	EUAN GILLON Head of Commercial at Your Golf Travel	CARLTON CARUGATI A Director with the golf travel body IAGTO	CAMERON RITCHIE Head of product, Spain & Portugal at GolfBreaks	JON RUBEN Managing Director of Golf Escapes	ANDREW SMITH Product director at Your Golf Travel
Favourite overall course on the Continent?	Valderrama Not only immaculate, but has that special occasion feel every time, a bit like St Andrews Old.	Bro Hoff Slot Really shows true quality and proves other countries on the continent have great courses.	Valderrama Because it is that special course, service and experience that all live up to the considerable hype.	PGA Catalunya Stadium Perfect piece of property and a very strong routing.	San Lorenzo I have played this course for 20+ years now and relish the opportunity every time.
Favourite course in Spain (or second if 1 was Spanish)?	La Reserva It's the ideal holiday course: a decent challenge, good facilities and a lovely setting.	I will go for PGA Catalunya in the north-east of Spain.	El Prat A stunning location and a course that offers a really varied experience due to changes in setting.	El Saler in Valencia I love links, plus the hotel is the only other thing you can see.	PGA Catalunya (Stadium) Part of a great set-up, the hotel reopening in 2016, will make it a special place.
Favourite course in Portugal (as above)?	Quinta do Lago South Classic Algarve, really encapsulating the look and feel of playing golf in that area.	Palmares I love the new layout and especially the terrific coastal holes.	Quinta do Lago South A very traditional and very playable Algarve golf course.	Quinta do Lago South Beautiful views, a test and nicely defined fairways.	Oitavos Dunes After San Lorenzo I'd go with Oitavos; views, design, location, and condition. Then Palmares!
Favourite course in France (as above)?	Val Andre A charming surprise - incredible views of the Channel from the clifftops and memorable holes.	Golf National I think it will be a great Ryder Cup venue.	Belle Dune Truly picturesque, with a lovely setting through some glorious dunes. Always a joy to play.	Belle Dune Has terrific links and pine sections.	Les Bordes A shame it is almost impossible to play. Morfontaine and Chantilly (Vineuil) are stunning heathlands.
Toughest course on the Continent?	Golf National Long, thick rough and very watery: not a good combo if you're not hitting it well...	The relatively new course at Thracian Cliffs in Bulgaria.	Off the backs, Finca Cortesin - it's never easy with long (and accurate) drives needed.	Royal Obidos Just impossible! But not unfair - water and sand are penal.	Valderrama In perfect condition and should be easier to score on than it is (though I hear Monte Mayor is back!)
Most beautiful course on the Continent?	Monte Rei It's isolation is part of the appeal, and the layout is a real reflection of the land itself.	Tough, there are loads. On the continent I would probably say Valderrama is a beautiful course.	Sperone This Corsican course is just about as jaw-dropping as you can get.	La Galliana Set in mountains near Valencia, it is quirky and remote.	Thracian Cliffs Gary Player may have over-egged the Pebble Beach comparisons... but not by much!
Best individual resort on the Continent?	Tivoli Victoria My favourite hotel on a golf course; fantastic rooms, top spa, and a Tour-level course.	I love Padierna Resort in Spain - great golf courses and a fine hotel too.	Most comprehensive resort for me is La Manga . Sorry it's boring but it has everything you need.	El Rompido Two good courses, super hotel and amazing value deals.	Finca Cortesin Great track, one of the best hotels in Europe, Michelin-star dining & award-winning spa!
Favourite lower-profile course on the Continent?	Costa Navarino If it was anywhere else in Europe it would be regarded as one of the top two/three resorts.	Villa d'Este near Lake Como in Italy.	Troia A great course in a fairly unknown area; make it a day trip as you need to get the boat across.	Ribagolfe No.1 Nicely cut through cork forest; two good courses here in fact.	El Saler Not a hidden gem but is underrated. Only course I've ever played on a holiday, four days in a row!
Favourite area on the Continent?	Western Algarve I like the less commercially developed villages and Palmares has upped the area's golf output.	Lisbon I just love the area, with a great city and great golf resorts.	Costa Brava Great mix of Spanish and French influence, cheap flights to Girona and some of the best-value golf.	Costa del Sol I just love the variety of golf on offer.	Costa Brava Great golf and so much more. 20 Michelin stars, beaches, heritage and a warm welcome.
The next area on the Continent to really take off will be...?	Italy They have a clutch of up and coming pros that will help shine a light on the golf courses there.	Destination wise, maybe the Porto area or the country of Slovenia .	It's already established, but I do think Sweden - particularly around Skane - will be more and more popular.	Bulgaria If more flights went there, it is ready to take off.	Porto Has everything required to attract travelling golfers.



55 PGA National (Links) (▼8)

Malmö, Sweden



+46 406 355 100, pgaswedennational.se. Par 72, 7,474 yards. Kyle Phillips.

TJ The sea may be missing on this 'Links', but, the wind is not. No day is ever the same here.
OD The 'Links' is hilly with larger greens well protected by strategically-placed bunkers. (Not unlike Luffness in character). Good condition.
GW VERDICT A very solid 'second' course and another triumph for Kyle Phillips.



54 Biella (▼8)

Magnano, Italy



+39 1567 9151, golfclubbiella.it. Par 73, 7,105 yards. John Morrison.

NB It's easy to see why 'Le Betulle' (the Birches) is so highly rated. The strong and challenging John Morrison layout occupies pleasantly undulating terrain, with many elevated tees and attractive dog-legging holes in the Alpine mix.
GW VERDICT Serene track among birch, oak, chestnut and firs while little ditches add alarm.



53 Sand (▼9)

Jönköping, Sweden



+46 36 308 308, sandgolfclub.com. Par 72, 6,690 yards. Hills & Forrest.

BL An inland links with large artificial sand dunes. A lot of the holes are fantastic. Five of the holes have water hazards in your playing line.
PBe Often a seaside feel though it is in middle Sweden. Great course, not far behind Bro Hof.
GW VERDICT A high climber in 2013, this mid-list spot feels right for this former potato field.

52

Golf du Medoc (Vignes) NEW ENTRY

Bordeaux, France



+33 556 703 131, golfdumedocresort.com. Par 72, 6,842 yards. Rod Whitman.

CB After the first three holes of more obviously parkland fare, the Vignes returns to the kind of easy-to-love heathland holes of its sister the Chateaux. A super collection of classy holes with an especially elegant set of par 3s.

GW VERDICT We are not shy of admitting earlier mistakes and when a course comes in at No.52, we have to say it should have been in the Top 100 earlier. After a proper assessment of the Vignes last year, we are pleased to right this wrong. A very strong new entry and a top-50 slot in future lists is entirely feasible.



WHY I RATE IT BY BILL COORE
 "Rod did a fantastic job with the Vignes. It compliments the Chateaux in terms of aesthetics and playing characteristics while presenting a different sort of course. I love holes 3, 5, 6, 8, 11, 16 and 18."



51 Domaine Imperial (▼9)

Geneva, Switzerland

+41 229 990 600, golfdomaineimperial.com. Par 72, 6,932 yards. Pete Dye.

FC Deserves a high placing, especially because of the wonderful setting of this Pete Dye course at the shores of Lake Geneva (neighboured by the Schumacher family). Its clubhouse, bought in 1859 by Prince Jérôme Napoleon, is a palace. **GW** A wonderful setting with views of Mont Blanc, it only falls as others leap into the top 50.



49 Villa d'Este (▼2)

Montorfano, Italy

+39 031 200 200, golfvilladeste.com. Par 69, 6,268 yards. Peter Gannon.

NB The quality of the treat that awaits here is quickly revealed at the downhill par-5 1st and returning uphill par-4 2nd. Mature fir trees together with occasional oak, birch and chestnut provide tree-lined avenues all visitors will love. **GW** We adore this old-fashioned woodland, which is given plenty of bite by small greens.



47 Santander (▼8)

Madrid, Spain

+34 91 257 3929, golfsantander.es. Par 72, 7,500 yards. Rees Jones.

JAL Rees Jones has built a long and really attractive design at Santander. **GW** Stays in the top 50 but there wasn't as much affection for this long course as in previous lists. Rees Jones' work can be marmite and these 7,500 yards of water-infused parkland perhaps lacks the charm of others in the higher positions.



50 The Scandinavian (New) (▼15)

Farum, Denmark

+45 481 74020, thescandinavian.dk. Par 72, 7,135 yards. Robert Trent Jones Jr.

OD The New is good but there are a few weaker holes that hold it back from a higher ranking. **TV** Denmark's newest championship course and the club is the place for the rich and famous. **GW VERDICT** Impressive new woodland course with lots of risk-reward holes made exciting by the presence of water.

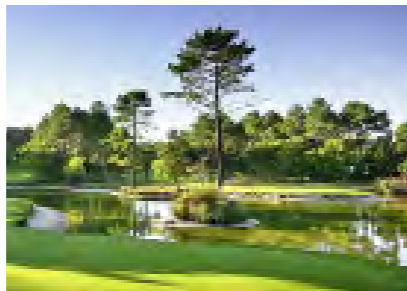


48 Barseback (Masters) (▼8)

Malmö, Sweden

+46 46 776 230, barseback-golf.se. Par 73, 7,245 yards. Ture Bruce.

TJ A walk through majestic pine forests and a raw seaside landscape. **OD** Wonderful mix of holes surrounded by huge pines sculpted by the wind and lovely links holes. **BL** Wonderful woodland-links combination. The wind from the sea gives it another dimension. **GW** Fine marriage of woodland and seaside golf.



46 Seignosse (▼18)

Landes, France

+33 558 416 830, opengolfclub.com. Par 72, 6,702 yards. Robert von Hagge.

PBe A magical course; challenging, beautiful, and exciting. For me, it is in front of Bro Hof. **CB** Easy to see why some view Seignosse as too tough, because at times your hands are sweating over a 90-yard wedge approach. But when 'out in the country', the ambience is majestic. **GW** Exacting examination in glorious woodland.

45 Rosendaelsche NEW ENTRY
Arnhem, Netherlands.

+31 26 44 214 38, rosendaelsche.nl. Par 72, 7,100 yards. Van Krimpen/Pennink/Staedler. One of the Netherlands' most historic clubs, Rosendaelsche is part of the 'Old Nine' network. Founded in 1895, in 1908 the club moved to its site near Arnhem when Del Court van Krimpen became chairman of Rosendaelsche on the condition the course was transferred to his estate. He designed the nine holes (for €200!).

In 1977 Frank Pennink extended the course with 11 new holes – now holes 4 and 5 and 10 through to 18 – while connecting the 3rd and 4th to become the new 3rd.

In 1984, Rosendaelsche hosted the Dutch Open, with participants including Lee Trevino and Bernhard Langer, who won

by opening with a scintillating 64 – a new course record that still stands today.

Then last year two new holes (6th and 7th) were built and all the new bunkers and championship tees were re-done by Christoph Staedler from Germany.

CB There is no doubt in my mind that Rosendaelsche merits inclusion alongside Eindhoven, Hilversum and Utrecht in discussions on the brilliant heathland courses of the Netherlands. They are a quartet that would sit very comfortably in England, from Nottinghamshire to Surrey and north Leeds to Berkshire.

GW VERDICT It has been in the Top 100 previously but now returns in its highest position – and it deserves every last place.



TOUR INSIGHT

“I LOVE LINKS, AND I LOVE HOLLAND”

Simon Dyson on his affection for the seaside courses of the Netherlands.



My best spell is normally between Switzerland and Portugal when we play in Holland and the Dunhill Links.

That's when I tend to play my best golf. I have three wins in Holland and finished second again last year and I won the Dunhill in 2009.

It's one of the first flights I book for the year. I absolutely love it there and The Kennemer in particular. I remember the first time I went in 2006 and playing the course thinking it suits my eye straight away.

I beat Richard Green in a play-off and then came back in 2009 and managed to beat Peter Lawrie and Peter Hedblom in a play-off.

The Netherlands and the KLM tournament definitely inspires me. There isn't a hole at The Kennemer (pictured below) that I don't enjoy.

I love links golf – it's my favourite by an absolute mile. You've got to be able to hit every single shot and you don't have to hit it 320 yards off the tee like on American-style courses.

There are some holes you might hit a 3-iron 300 yards sometimes. That's what I love about it – you've really got to use your imagination.

It's no coincidence that Open champions have the ball under control and are able to play well in the wind.

■ Simon Dyson is a six-time European Tour winner who has made 424 appearances on the circuit. Three of the 1999 Walker Cup player's wins have come in the Netherlands.





44 Oceanico Old (▲22)

Algarve, Portugal



+351 289 310341, oceanicogolf.com. Par 73, 6,839 yards. Pennink/Hawtree.

JVP A historic mark of courses in Portugal. A good score is accessible if you stay out the pines. **GW** A notable move up the list for a course that has previously become all too easy to ignore in the wake of new developments across Europe. The fact is, arriving at the Old still indicates you are in for several hours of classy, pine-lined fun.



43 LykiaLinks (▲5)

Belek, Turkey



0870 224 5524, lykiaworldantalya.com. Par 72, 6,924 yards. Perry Dye.

CB An essential experience on the Continent. Not a links as Britons understand it, but one of the continent's most distinctive courses – and a proper test too. The top 30 is competitive... but Lykia's distinctive nature would enhance it. **GW VERDICT** Spectacular seaside course that is the most memorable (and top ranked) in Belek.



42 Son Gual (▲2)

Majorca, Spain



+34 971 785 888, son-gual.com. Par 72, 7,240 yards. Thomas Himmel.

CB German owned and designed, after playing here you aren't surprised to discover this course works in every respect. New, but already settled in nicely. Tough, but aesthetically pleasing. Relatively expensive, but reassuringly so. **GW VERDICT** Majorca's No.1 is the epitome of a high-calibre modern championship course.



41 Royal Park (▼11)

Torino, Italy



+39 119 235 719, iroveri.it. Par 72, 7,180 yards. Robert Trent Jones Snr.

NB Located just north of Turin, in the grounds of La Mandria Regional Park is 'I Roveri', home to a much-admired layout spread across gently undulating terrain, this classical design contains one very good hole after another. **GW VERDICT** Incorporates tree-lined and open parkland phases and remains Italy's No.1.



40 Sperone (▼11)

Corsica, France



+33 495 731 713, sperone.com. Par 72, 6,672 yards. Robert Trent Jones Snr.

NB A wonderfully scenic course, located on cliffs directly above an azure blue sea. On the back-nine, much of which is played at the cliff's edge, you also look down onto the sandy beaches and rocky headlands of Corsica's southerly shoreline. **GW** Categorically thrilling, but loses a few marks for presentation compared to others in top 50.



39 PGA National (Lakes) (▼12)

Malmö, Sweden



+46 406 355 100, pgaswedennational.se. Par 72, 7,655 yards. Kyle Phillips.

OD Sits on a bed of 50cm sand to try to make it like a links but for me it is a US inland course. Lakes is in my opinion the better of the two here with more water, smaller greens, larger bunkers. **TJ** Good design and condition even if visually, the experience is a little undistinguished. **GW** Solid, modern fare on former farmland.



38 Saint Germain (▲5)

Paris, France



+33 139 103 030, golfsaintgermain.org. Par 72, 6,734 yards. Harry Colt.

CB Oozes bygone English charm with an effortlessly skilful routing among mature woodland leading to magnificent green complexes that alone deserve a top-40 ranking in my view. Predictably strong 'Colt' par 3s. **GW VERDICT** A small rise for this timeless Harry Colt design that is Paris' most underrated track.



37 Sotogrande (Old) (▲5)

Sotogrande, Spain



+34 956 785 014, golfsotogrande.com. Par 72, 6,894 yards. Trent Jones Snr.

CB Regarded by many as RTJ's best work in Europe with good reason. Effortlessly charms on velvet fairways and in its characterful clubhouse. **PBe** A lovely course oozing tradition and quality. **GW VERDICT** Difficult to rank, given it has revamped half its holes. We loved it anyway and are predicting the new work will only enhance it.



SERGIO GARCIA

"El Prat is without doubt, one of my favourite golf courses, not only in Spain, but anywhere in the world."

36 El Prat (Rosa) (▼7)

Barcelona, Spain



+34 93 728 1000, rcgep.com. Par 72, 7,000 yards. Greg Norman.

CB Located 30 minutes from Barcelona having had to relocate from near the airport, the members have been gifted wonderful new courses to play on (there are five loops here). **GW** Only falls due to the rises enjoyed by some from outside the top 50; it is no reflection on the outstanding 'Pink' course. Penal but tranquil.

33

Eindhoven (▲47)

Eindhoven, Netherlands

+31 402 014 816, eindhovenschegolf.nl.

Par 72, 6,805 yards. Harry Colt.


CB The course of the Phillips electronics firm comprises two equally impressive nine-hole loops in tranquil woodland. A few elevated tees, occasionally undulating fairways and some dog-legs offer variety but essentially this is a further example of classy heathland golf in the Netherlands. Another you could put in Surrey and be confident visitors would not deem it out of place. To play it on a golf break, it's best to team it up with the best tracks around Antwerp rather than Amsterdam.

GW VERDICT We can file this, along with Golf du Medoc (Vignes) as an error. While we have consistently rated Netherlands' courses highly, we have consistently underrated this Harry Colt heathland, which has been updated to keep it a challenge for even the strongest players. An enormous jump up the list from the bottom fifth to the top third, but if anything we are still not certain it is high enough. Deserves to be viewed alongside the best in Europe and although the top 30 is packed with magnificent courses, it is easy to imagine Eindhoven will end up within the top 25.



35 Ravenstein (Old) (►)

Tervuren, Belgium

 +32 276 75801, rgcb.be. Par 72, 6,606 yards. Seymour Dunn and Tom Simpson.


NB A lovely old course with a stunning variety of trees and bushes lining the gently undulating fairways. In spring, the flowering rhododendrons create colour that adds significantly to the course's inescapably garden-like character.

GW VERDICT Proof that courses do not need to be long to be either well regarded or testing.



34 The Scandinavian (Old) (▼12)

Farum, Denmark

 +45 4817 4020, thescandinavian.dk. Par 72, 7,254 yards. Robert Trent Jones Jnr.


OD Of the Danish courses, The Scandinavian Old (even though only some 10 years) is a great challenge. Large, undulating but true greens with a number of challenging approach shots makes this a course worth visiting.

GW VERDICT Robert Trent Jones Jnr and Bruce Charlton did a marvellous job on this bland site.



32 Penha Longa (Atlantico) (▲3)

Lisbon, Portugal

 +351 219 249 011, penhalonga.com. Par 72, 6,878 yards. RTJ Jnr/Kyle Phillips.

CB Exciting, dramatic and exhilarating, Phillips did well to manage the mildly preposterous natural terrain and keep this course 'proper'.

GW VERDICT Penha Longa have worked hard, especially in the last couple of years, to ensure the conditioning of Atlantico matches the quality of the design and the views. Hence this rise.

“THEY WANTED IT TO BE THE AUGUSTA OF EUROPE”

Four men with Ryder Cup pedigree and a vast knowledge of the continent's finest courses as a result of 1,778 European Tour appearances assess mainland Europe's star names.

With 1,778 European Tour appearances between them, it is difficult to imagine a more qualified group to offer an assessment of the finest courses on Continental Europe through the eyes of a Tour pro.

Gathered at Magnolia Park by Tony Jacklin, the Oxfordshire club to which he is attached, the double Major champion chaired a discussion of the continent's elite with three men who also enjoyed distinguished Ryder Cup careers.

David Gilford, Peter Baker and Paul Broadhurst played significant parts in the biennial matches, but it is their knowledge from decades travelling around Europe that we were interested in. All four were impressively candid as they mulled over the best of the best.

Let's start with Valderrama...

DG I used to love Valderrama – my sort of course really, as you have got to hit it straight there. I liked the test and the look of it too.

TJ I used to live there and have probably played 1,000 rounds there. Over five or six years, I'd be playing three or four times a week. I remember when Trent Jones came in and tweaked it and it was suddenly a great challenge as the trees all grew in too. It was so narrow; just because you hit the fairway didn't mean the green was in view as the trees were overhanging. The 17th green was messed with... I remember Nicky Price's balls coming back into the water off a good shot.

PBa It's fiddly. The first tournament we played the new 17th in it was almost unplayable; you had to play right onto the back to hold it up.

PB I had mixed experiences round there during the Volvo Masters. At first I struggled but I learnt to play the course and local knowledge is important. You need to play it a few times to know where all the good misses are.

TJ I worked with the company who owned it before the Patinos in 1985. He came in and did what he wanted. He got the USGA in, housed them in his guest house and wanted to create the Augusta of Europe. If they told him “three 3/32nds”, he'd go down a bit further; he thought he knew better. So the greens went a bit brown and weren't initially good. Eventually he learnt they knew what they were talking about. He paid Seve to re-do the 17th green so they could get the Ryder Cup over Pedrena. He got it.

PB It's usually in immaculate condition but there was often a problem with the greens spiking up late on. There are a few stories about that!

PBa The old metal spikes really cut it up!

TJ It became too short due to the ball and equipment. So guys didn't need to hit driver.

PBa You always felt out of position there. Always needing to hit draws and fades to avoid trees.

DG And always windy, surprisingly so.

What about next door at San Roque's Old?

TJ I left after Dave Thomas and I designed it, so I didn't really see it fully mature... so the lads' opinion of it will be better than mine! Same land as Valderrama, rolling terrain with cork oaks.

PB A fairer course than Valderrama as I always felt Valderrama was a bit harsh. Always windy at San Roque and made it very tough. You needed every sort of shot. On a calm day you think you

can have a go at it but you never really do.

PB You have to hit all the shots, draw it off some tees, fade it off others. There are plateau fairways and greens you can tumble off. Greens weren't quite as tricky as Valderrama.

PBa And you really have to be wary if you suffer from claustrophobia on San Roque New... Tight!

Do you rate PGA Catalunya (pictured)?

PBa It's got better and better over the years. It's a good golf course now. It's challenging and you certainly have to drive it well, which you can see in the scoring because no-one burns it up. You get the odd good score but not over four days.

PB I know it well... unfortunately, because I have had a few Q School visits at the end of my career. As Peter says, you've got to drive it very well as it is a very hard course to play from the rough. It is a very good venue for Q School as it really does sort the wheat from the chaff.

DG I only played there once and it felt to me like a good new course that would mature nicely.

What is the verdict on Golf National?

PBa 'Broady' loves it!

PB Well, I used to anyway, until they lengthened it by 500+ yards. I could've gone and played the French Open (as a former champion) but I didn't fancy 7,500 yards! It was more charming 20 years ago. It was still tough but is now a brute.

DG It can really change there; sometimes they cut the rough and there is no wind and the cut is four under and sometimes the rough is up and it's windy and it's five over.

PB I used to be able to hit rescue into some of

the tighter fairways but now with extra length you need to be hitting driver... into the same small spots you were positioning your rescue.

GW All that water makes no difference to Tour pros though... (general laughter)

DG Played into a left-to-right wind on those last few holes it is not something anyone relishes.

PBa The tee shot on 15 and the second in...

PB It's a funny one; it's in the middle of France, but plays a bit like a links. The 4th, 5th and 6th are not great holes but come the holes around the clubhouse and it is a different story.

TJ The land you're given is key. You want always to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Get a flat site like that and you need big pockets to work it.

DG The only thing is, you just normally don't get good winners there... isn't that right 'Broady'?

Will it be a fine Ryder Cup course?

PBa Well it has a great finish. Those last holes are brutal and with all the stands around, fans won't need to move to see all this great action.

PB The stands will have to be built on the mounds as lots of spectators won't get round.

Three of you know Les Bordes – are you fans?

PB Every hole is different and you don't get that on many courses. You can remember every hole and it is rarely like that. We refused to play off the backs; it's just too difficult! Playing it at 6,700 was about right. It is a brute. You've got to drive it in position, and then there's water everywhere.

PBa To see the deer roaming across it is majestic. There are 17 good-to-great holes, only 16 up a hill is not a favourite. The rest are fantastic. It would

be great to have a tournament there. In fact it needs to have tournaments there.

DG It is quite soft there and it makes it play its full yardage. It's a long way for someone like me but a really superb challenge. It is the sort of old-fashioned style of course that I enjoy, just longer.

PB The 'ball count' there is good fun; we've done these Tesco weekends the last three years and 60 guys go – 15 pros and 45 amateurs – and the first year 1,000+ balls were lost in three rounds. It's not just water, the rough swallows them too.

What are your opinions of the Dutch courses?

PB Kennemer is a good track from the composite they make up. It's windy and a good test.

DG Hilversum is one I enjoy; they've had the Dutch Open a few times and I always enjoyed it.

PBa Links are always dependent on the turf and the wind. Noordwijk played a bit too lush, too much water on it. There is a bit of a Bermuda Triangle with the wooded section but it's nice.

You have all enjoyed success of some sort in Portugal... which courses stand out for you all?

PB I won at Penina and Oitavos. Both good albeit totally different. Oitavos plays linky and when it's blowing a gale it is tough. A few good funky holes. Penina is a nice traditional course. It's not really somewhere I would have expected to do well on. Good par 3s.

PBa At Troia the greens were harsh and it was tough, especially on a windy day. In fact now I think back it was lovely – but also one of the most difficult you will get.

DG Yes it was very good, one of my favourites. It

is cool to go on the ferry to get there. I also like Quinta do Lago, a composite of the courses. Vale do Lobo is also nice and I won at Vila Sol, nice and narrow between the pines!

Any other favourites from across the continent?

TJ The Bell family used to own Le Touquet and they lived in Jersey when I was there. I thought Le Touquet was very nice, a lovely place for a weekend. Hardelot was a fantastic old-fashioned sandy test. Italy has some good tracks. Sardinia such as Is Molas. And the one by the Aga Khan, Pevero, that Trent Jones did. If you went off the fairway you were in rocks. Very difficult land to work but they did it well.

PB Chantilly is a great course you could lose your bag in it never mind your ball. Lovely English feel to it, like a tighter Little Aston.

PB Sevilla is a very solid track. Funny last hole by the practice ground but otherwise impressive.

TJ What about El Saler? Lovely. That was a track – and linky. And very, very good.

■ Tony and co spoke at the opening of the new hotel at Magnolia Park Hotel, Golf and Country Club, which is giving 50 scholarships to local kids allowing them to play the course free until age 17. 01844 239700, magnoliapark.co.uk



(clockwise) Paul Broadhurst, Peter Baker, Tony Jacklin & David Gilford.



31 Sporting Club Berlin (Faldo) (▼16)
Scharmützelsee, Germany

+49 336 3163 300, sporting-club-berlin.de. Par 72, 7,093 yards. Faldo.
H-JW There are 131 devilishly deep pot bunkers along dune-like fairways leading to generously-sized greens. A beautiful beast for all who know how to deal with the potential danger.
GW VERDICT 2022 Ryder Cup hopeful is a big-boned course between a mature forest and open terrain. Tough rather than charming in nature.



28 San Lorenzo (►)
Algarve, Portugal

+351 289 396 522, sanlorenzogolfcourse.com. Par 72, 6,821 yards. Joseph Lee.
PG Classy and usually immaculate; requires sound strategic play to score. Top 20 for me.
JVP Absolutely brilliant. Fantastic views at times.
BL From the 6th tee the view is superb. Top 25.
GW Maintains its top-30 spot in the main due to the coastal holes, which are majestic. Easy to see why it is so popular with British golfers.



26 Sevilla (▼5)
Seville, Spain

+34 954 124 301, sevillagolf.com. Par 72, 7,140 yards. José María Olazabal.
JAL Host of the World Cup, it's probably the best Jose María Olazabal Golf design. Also, it's always in pristine condition.
GW Not quite as much love for this Olazabal design as there was two years ago but it is a classy parkland that is well worth journeying north from Sotogrande when visiting there.



29 Praia d'El Rey (▲4)
Obidos, Portugal

+351 262 905 005, praia-del-rey.com. Par 73, 7,052 yards. Cabell B Robinson.
JVP Beautiful scenario in the west coast, where the wind and climate can transport you to the north of Europe! The holes near the ocean are as amazing as they are difficult. Very good.
GW But for the sight of residential development, this is a top-20 fixture. Even so, the genuine links holes are comfortably enough to secure this rise.



27 Hardelot (Les Pins) (▲71)
Hardelot, France

+33 321 837 310, hardelotgolf.com. Par 73, 6,480 yards. Simpson, Pont/Boissonnas.
CB One of the finest renovations of a classic I have seen. If you haven't been to Hardelot in the past year, make a point of heading to the Pas de Calais region to enjoy this reworked Simpson.
GW Was close to dropping out of the Top 100 in 2013, now this astronomical rise following the overhaul as documented in our October issue.



25 Lubker (Sand & Sky) (▼8)
Nimtofte, Denmark

+45 38 408 000, lubker.com. Par 72, 7,082 yards. Robert Trent Jones Jnr.
TV A testing course with beautiful views. You will need your entire arsenal if you want to conquer this Robert Trent Jones Jnr course
GW VERDICT The Forest loop is good too. Opened in 2008, this small drop for Lubker does not reflect our opinion of it, merely the ascent of others. Incredibly mature feel to a new course.



30 Finca Cortesin (▲44)
Malaga, Spain

+34 952 937 883, fincacortesin.com. Par 72, 7,480 yards. Cabell B Robinson.
CB This course will surprise you. Located 20 minutes from the other big names surrounding Valderrama in the Sotogrande area, it differs in character from the others and offer a fresh look, a significant test and an all-round five-star experience.
GW VERDICT Host to the World Match Play in 2009 and 2011, this is one of the best new courses on the continent. Terrific mountain and sea views from elevated tees and a beautifully-conditioned course. This huge jump feels fully vindicated.

EXCLUSIVE

CATALUNYA HAS RYDER CUP CLASS

By Jose Maria Olazabal.



The Stadium is one of the best courses in Spain. It's fantastic.

It is a very well balanced course; you have some strong par 3s – some of them are very long, some middle distance – and then you have a great combination of tough par 4s and shorter par 4s while the par 5 holes in general are reachable.

There is quite a lot of risk and reward and it is a course we like to play.

They have put a few new tees in and that has given just a bit more teeth to the course, which you could see from the event this year. The scores told you how good and how tough the course is now.

The practice facilities are also second to none.

■ Jose Maria Olazabal won two Masters and captained Europe in 2012.

EXCLUSIVE

THE FINEST IN FRANCE

By Raphael Jacquelin.



My top five in France would be Chantilly (Vineuil), Le Golf National, Terre Blanche (Le Chateau), Chiberta and Le Bois-Chenu.

My favourite hole on Le Chateau is the 11th – it is the 'signature' hole of the course!

A nice downhill par 5 that can be reached in two shots, it offers a very welcoming green as well as a wonderful view of the village of Fayence. This hole is just beautiful...

To me, the 3rd is the most difficult on Le Chateau course. This is a very long par 4, dog-leg left, with a narrow fairway for the first shot. The green is very deep and narrow for a long second shot with an iron or a rescue, which makes it difficult. We are generally satisfied by the par here...

■ Raphael Jacquelin has won four European Tour events.

THE ARCHITECT'S VIEW

“I FIND COLT THE SMART, EXPERT CRAFTSMAN, SIMPSON THE ECCENTRIC, CREATIVE GENIUS”



Dutch designer Frank Pont discusses his restorations of Top 100 courses, reveals his personal favourites to play and compares the work of British design icons Harry Colt and Tom Simpson.

Frank Pont qualified as a civil engineer and earned an MBA at Chicago University before becoming an investment banker with Deutsche Bank. But in 2001 he left London to study Golf Course Architecture at Heriot Watt University and, after apprenticeships with David McLay Kidd in Ireland and Hawaii, formed 'Infinite Variety Golf Design'. It has proved a wise career change, as he now has a reputation for skilful restoration of classics. He is also not shy of expressing candid opinions...

My debt of thanks to HS Colt

People ask me if I make a conscious effort to become a 'Colt expert'? Yes and no. I got my first Colt job at my then home course Eindhoven, and when that was a success the other Harry Colt courses of the Netherlands also started talking to me, and before long seven of the eight remaining Colt courses were working with me. In the end, entering the market from the top was both luck and probably one of the best business strategies I could have devised.

The quality of the Netherlands

The seaside courses – Royal Hague, Noordwijk and Kennemer – usually head up the Dutch rankings, and for a good reason, they are very good. The heathlands – 'De Pan', Eindhoven, Hilversum (and less so Roosendaelsche, Toxandria and De Hoge Kleij) are very good too – but maybe lack the spectacular coastal vistas. The Dutch linksland is simply superb; had Holland been part of the UK between 1860 and 1930, then the world now would have had another 40 world-class links courses.

Given I am a member at De Pan I am of course biased. But if I look at the feedback of leading architects I have shown De Pan to – Tom Doak, Mike Clayton, Brian Schneider and George Waters – it is right up there. Most simply loved it.

Why 'De Pan' is exquisite

I would compare De Pan in character and scale to Swinley Forest or New Zealand. Other famous heathlands are all much bigger in scale than De Pan. But if you force me to put De Pan in a list it

would be just behind the Sunningdales, equal to Walton Heath Old, slightly better than St George's Hill and before Woking, De Pan is very close to what Harry Colt always tried to create.

The place has a great and varied routing, the holes are very memorable, there is a lot of asymmetry of defence and the strategy that opens up. There are quirks, and the greens and their surrounds are typical Colt.

In England, Colt's favourite place to play golf was Swinley; if he had lived in Holland, I am pretty sure it would have been De Pan.

It is the ultimate place for a lazy, late-evening round, a beautiful, tranquil place where you can empty your mind and lose your stress. An American friend once said of it: "If I could play only one more round in my life it would be at Royal Hague. If I had to play golf the rest of my life as a member it would be at De Pan."

De Pan is a special place, and was under the radar for a long time. But in the last 10 years,

COLT v SIMPSON

It is hard to compare the work of Harry Colt and Tom Simpson – but easy to see style differences. Colt's approach was much more methodological and consistent, so it is easier to tell quickly if and where things have been altered; grass-faced bunkers, trees near greens or bunkers, symmetrical bunker defence of greens, the number of bunkers around greens – all are sure signs something happened after Colt left.

Simpson was just much more, well, crazy. One can expect all kinds of strange things, although he had a number of principles, which mostly centred around hole strategy.

I find Colt the smart expert craftsman, Simpson the eccentric creative genius. Simpson's worst holes are far worse than those of Colt, but his best are in my view often even better than Colt's best.

Simpson was better at natural-looking bunkers... but I'd have Colt do the routing.

people in the know have made an effort to come and see it with the other Dutch Colts. I am very lucky to be a member and live less than a mile away. The only problem is I'm so busy with work and raising two boys with my wife that I don't find time to play it as much as I'd like. I pray that changes once the boys get the golf bug.

The legend of Royal Hague

Growing up at Eindhoven, one of the oldest clubs in Holland, people spoke in awe of Royal Hague. This was partly because it was such an established, historic place, but also because of the spectacular landscape in which it lies.

I first played the course in 2002 and from the moment I stood on the 1st tee I was blown away by the course. There is nothing in Holland, and maybe nothing in Europe, that comes close to the landscape on which the course is laid out.

I noted the greens were laid out in very sporty locations and the fairways had massive rolls. The other thing that was striking was how few bunkers the course needed to defend itself.

Most of my work there was rebuilding the greens, surrounds and bunkers, then returning the tees to a style that fits the quality of the links.

My favourites to play

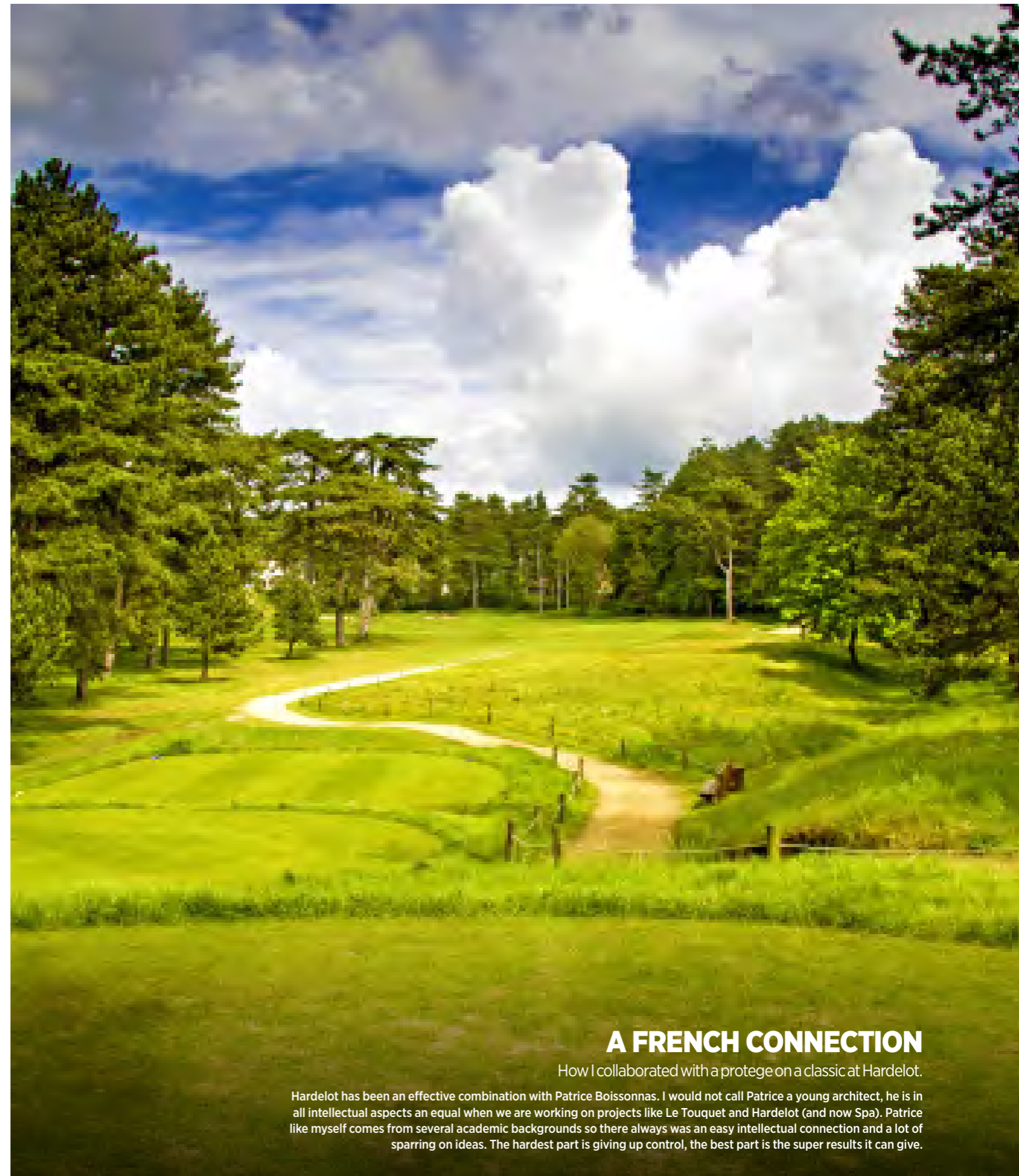
Without mentioning any courses I am connected to, I would select four that stand out.

Fontainebleau in France, because it's a great Simpson course which flies under the radar for many. With a serious tree-clearing program and a sympathetic bunker restoration it could be in the same league as Morfontaine.

Falkenstein (Hamburg) as it's by far the best course in Germany, a mix between Sunningdale, De Pan and Royal Hague, a course that unfortunately far too few people have played.

Penati, a superb first solo design by Jonathan Davison in Slovakia, because of the incredible sandy site and the creative and playful design that makes it so much fun to play.

And **El Saler** in Spain, a tough but subtle and understated links on the Mediterranean by Javier Arana, who deserves to be studied by golf course architecture enthusiasts. ■



A FRENCH CONNECTION

How I collaborated with a protege on a classic at Hardelot.

Hardelot has been an effective combination with Patrice Boissonnas. I would not call Patrice a young architect, he is in all intellectual aspects an equal when we are working on projects like Le Touquet and Hardelot (and now Spa). Patrice like myself comes from several academic backgrounds so there always was an easy intellectual connection and a lot of sparring on ideas. The hardest part is giving up control, the best part is the super results it can give.

22 Budersand (▲3)

Sylt, Germany



+49 4651 449 2710, budersand.de. Par 72, 6,621 yards. Rolf-Stephan Hansen.

HJ-W An enormous canvas with holes like ships in heavy seas. You never feel like this course has been wrested from a former military site, with more than 90 devious ‘Scottish’ pot bunkers, lightning-fast greens and magnificent views of the North Sea. Raw and powerful but well-presented.

GW VERDICT This barren land had been eyed up by housing developers, but they were repelled on environmental grounds. A golf course got the

green light though, with guarantees the military structures were used. So, old bunker entrances, underground tanks, cellars and tunnels were incorporated into the design by Rolf-Stephan Hansen, who routed loops that return to the clubhouse on this sandy site. Fescue initially struggled to establish, but is now superb.

“As an architect you should be very proud to get the chance to design a course on true linksland – and George Peper describes Budersand as a fine and true links,” Hansen tells GW.



24 Falsterbo (▲6)

Malmö, Sweden



+46 40 475 078, falsterbogk.se. 6,649 yards. Bauer, Nordwall, Chamberlain.

OD The improvements with the help of Alan Strachan (Walton Heath) are significant; now an outstanding links of high British standard.

BL A classic links. A must play and Sweden’s No.2.

PBe A traditional links, the best in Scandinavia.

TJ One of Sweden’s few true links courses.

GW VERDICT Simply, authentic seaside golf.



23 Hamburger (▼3)

Hamburg, Germany



+49 40 812 177, hamburgergolf-club.de. Par 71, 6,384 yards. Colt, Alison, Morrison.

HJW My No 1. On the glorious undulating north bank of the Elbe, it enjoys an English landscape of pine forest decorated with heather and sprinkled with refined hazards and tiered greens. This HS Colt has not withered over time.

GW VERDICT A 2013 revision ensures this characterful woodland-heathland still endures.



21 Onyria Palmares (▲2)

Lagos, Portugal



+351 282 790 500, onyriapalmares.com. Par 72, 6,730-7,124 yards. RTJ Jnr.

PG Exhilarating to play, with downhill drives and spectacular views. I prefer it to Oitavos Dunes.

JVP Most tees will take your breath away. 27 holes of pure golf. This is one of the most brilliant courses in Algarve and a challenge all the way.

GW All three loops are of a similar calibre but if you have just time for 18, makes sure Praia is one.

20



Hilversum (▲48)

Hilversum, Netherlands

+31 356 857 060, hilversumschegolfclub.nl. Par 72, 6,710 yards. Harry Colt & Kyle Phillips.

CB Magnificent heathland that deserves its reputation as a tough examination but certainly does not lose any marks for being so. A top-20 course without question in my mind.

GW VERDICT A huge rise for this Colt-Phillips design, which had previously lost out by virtue of its collection of exacting par 4s that did not always appeal to all levels of player. We are pleased to elevate this terrific heather-and-pine heaven to a ranking more applicable to its quality.



EXCLUSIVE

A COLT CLASSIC THAT NEEDED TO BREATHE

Kyle Phillips reveals the care he took in managing a refurbishment of the traditional heathland of Hilversum.



Hilversum is a very fun course among heather and pines. So it was a delight

to be asked to make a few changes to this Colt classic; I hope I have done it justice.

What had happened, as so

often does at these types of courses, is the trees had grown up and the members hadn't noticed. We kind of led the way in terms of getting a club into a tree maintenance program.

They had a guy they knew who did a super job of backing up what we wanted to do. He

explained how it would help playability and maintenance, and now they are in a routine of every three years doing very simple 'cleaning' rather than waiting 20 years to do something major.

That has helped the course breathe, even though it is still

fairly dense, but you can at least see between the holes.

We tweaked the weaker holes around the clubhouse but once you get over the road, it's pretty pure stuff over there.

■ Kyle Phillips is one of the world's leading architects.

15 Golf du Medoc (Châteaux) (▲42)

Bordeaux, France

+33 556 703 131, golfdumedocresort.com. Par 71, 6,907 yards. Bill Coore.

CB Lurking in the leafy suburbs on the northern outskirts of Bordeaux is this testament to the skill of Bill Coore. Would not be flattered by a top-10 spot.

GW VERDICT We believe the top 30 this year is incredibly strong, by virtue of the elevation of the likes of this wonderful heathland. Along with the Vignes, the local claret, and a fine on-site hotel, it is difficult to imagine a poor weekend here.

EXCLUSIVE

“ADMIRERS OF SWINLEY WOULD APPRECIATE IT”

Bill Coore reflects on his work on Golf du Medoc’s Châteaux course, one of the highest climbers in our Top 100.



While I am pleased with the outcome of all the holes on the Châteaux, I am particularly pleased with the 1st and 18th. When the course plays firm and fast as intended, each of these holes requires thought and skill. The 1st introduces the player to a type of golf that says ‘Hello, this is going to be different’ while the

finishing hole seems to summarise the round with regard to the aesthetic, the challenges presented, the ways to succeed, and hopefully the enjoyment to be had.

I wasn’t surprised when the Châteaux proved a stiff test for European Tour pros in 1999. Although designed for the enjoyment of the members, it has enough defence, primarily

through its angles and detailed contouring, to present interesting championship golf. Bernard Pascassio was adamant it should be able to measure up in championships and he was key in helping Rod Whitman and I create that calibre of course.

When Golf du Médoc is presented with its best playing condition, I believe admirers of Sunningdale, Swinley Forest and

their heathland neighbours would appreciate the Châteaux.

It is beyond my ability to speculate if Americans would rate Châteaux were it over here but I believe it’d be appreciated, especially if it was fortunate enough to land on Long Island.

My other French favourites? Chantilly and Morfontaine.

■ **Bill Coore is one half of the feted Coore-Crenshaw firm.**



19 Troia (▲18)

Lisbon, Portugal

+351 265 494 112, troiagolf.com. Par 72, 6,911 yards. Robert Trent Jones Snr.

JVP Near the biggest beach in Europe and built in sandy terrain, it will be an experience you will never forget. Even if it is a difficult course.

CB Challenging and memorable. Sandy turf complemented by pines and small greens.

GW VERDICT Its remote location has counted against it, but this is a world-class seaside course.



18 Oitavos Dunes (▲2)

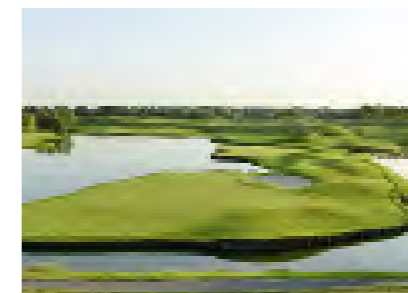
Cascais, Portugal

+351 214 860 600, oitavosdunes.com. Par 71, 6,893 yards. Arthur Hills.

PG Links-like in places and highly entertaining.

JVP It’s perfect when you can combine pure nature with pure golf. Oitavos is a perfect challenge for the expert golfer.

GW Starts among trees but it is the far end of the course where it is truly world class, with Atlantic views, fabulous holes and seaside turf to love.



17 Golf National (▼11)

Paris, France

+01 3012 0458, golf-national.com. Par 72, 7,321 yards. Chesneau & von Hagge.

CB One of the most impressive design and shaping jobs in this Top 100. To have a course this good from the pancake-flat site is a fine achievement. Nervous energy is frequently expended as you tackle this water-based test.

GW Loved by Tour pros as it is ‘all out in front of them’. Lacks the charm of those above it.



16 Bro Hof Slott (▼3)

Stockholm, Sweden

+46 854 527 990, brohofslott.se. Par 72, 8,054 yards. Robert Trent Jones Jnr.

TJ Ranked number one in Sweden since 2007, and one of the best courses on the continent.

HJW I still think it is the best in Scandinavia.

BL Absolutely the best course in Sweden. And better than others like it such as Sporting Club Faldo and The Scandinavian Old. A top 12 course.



14 Monte Rei (▲4)

Algarve, Portugal

+351 281 950 950, monte-rei.com. Par 72, 7,181 yards. Jack Nicklaus.

PG Hard to score on: long, bouncy, with tricky greens and encroaching rough. Top 20

JVP Forget about the views or the classic course. Monte Rei is all about the challenge.

GW Oozes big budget quality and cements its place as Portugal’s No.1 for us. This east Algarve parkland will justifiably have eyes on the top 10.



13 Terre Blanche (Chateau) (▲1)

Fayence, France

+33 494 393 693, terre-blanche.com. Par 72, 7,235 yards. Dave Thomas.

CB A perfect mix of challenge and aesthetics.


PBe A lovely course that could be even higher. Playing it makes me smile the whole round. Gives me energy, excitement and challenges.

GW Relatively new but now established in the upper echelons of this list. The Chateau is the centre point for the Continent’s finest resort.



12 Chantilly (►)

Paris, France

 +33 344 570 443, golfdechantilly.com. Par 71, 6,994 yards. Tom Simpson.


CB Feels like a classic old English parkland as you play through avenues of mature trees. Lacks the thrills of others in the top 20 but for a peaceful round in serene beauty, few can match it. A regal experience in every respect.

GW VERDICT An open parkland with peerless green surfaces and a guarantee of tranquility.



10 El Saler (►)

Valencia, Spain

 +96 1611 186, parador.es. Par 72, 7,095 yards. Javier Arana.


PBe Only half of it is true links but those holes are great. Woodland holes not of the same class.

BL A fantastic and beautiful course. Top 12. **GW** Not in the immaculate condition of others in the top 10 but still good enough to hold onto its position by virtue of a terrific design by the sea from Javier Arana. Super views to the Med too.



7 Royal Zoute (▼3)

Cadiespad, Belgium

 +32 50 601 227, zoute.be. Par 72, 6,749 yards. Lieutenant Colonel Allen.


NB 'Knokke' is home to a links that ranks with the greats of Europe. The 'Outer' layout is inland from the beach and although it lacks amazing sea views, open areas of good-sized dunes, as well as pockets of pine trees, are found.

GW VERDICT Seaside course between pine and birch and boasts undulating greens.



11 Kennemer (▼4)

Haarlem, Netherlands

 +31 235 712 836, kennemergolf.nl. Colt, Pennink & SJH van Hengel.


CB All three loops are good and great debate exists over the best combination. Seaside golf that while being tough enough to test Tour pros in the Dutch Open, is playable for club golfers.

GW Lacks the huge sandy blowouts of Royal Hague or the undulating beachside links land of Noordwijkse but still a top-class experience.



9 Noordwijkse (►)

Leiden, Netherlands

 +31 252 344 488, noordwijksegolfclub.nl. Par 72, 6,908 yards. P De Jong.


CB Always enjoyable, whether on the excellent links sections that dominate Noordwijkse or in the dense woodland phase. Although if you spray it in the woods it can be quite miserable, given its narrow corridors of mature trees.

GW The sandy soil that offers such terrific turf is a highlight of a high-calibre links-woodland.



6 Royal Hague (▼3)

The Hague, Netherlands

 +31 705 179 607, khgcc.nl. Par 72, 6,771 yards. Colt, Alison, Morrison, Pont.

CB Colt's parting shot to the Netherlands, but in reality this was an Alison-Morrison effort. Does not lack for much despite Colt's absence and Pont's reworking has been a big success.

GW Huge sandy blowouts as well as hundreds of deciduous and evergreens trees; characterising Royal Hague is difficult but rating it highly is not.

PLAY THE ELITE
To play the leading French courses such as Chantilly, Fontainebleau and Morfontaine, visit privategolfkey.com

8 Fontainebleau (▲3)

Paris, France

+33 164 222 295, golffontainebleau.org. Par 72, 6,642 yards. Tom Simpson.

CB A nice rise into the top 10 for this wonderful heathland-woodland on the south-east outskirts of Paris. Only our No.1 is definitively better in France in my view.

GW VERDICT Absolutely oozes with class, this Tom Simpson legacy will never disappoint visitors with its quality and variety of both hole and landscape. Has top five potential.

EXCLUSIVE

FONTAINEBLEAU TOPS MY FRENCH FAVOURITES

European Tour winner Gregory Havret provides an entertaining assessment of the finest courses in his homeland.



Fontainebleau is France's most beautiful course and one of the world's finest. It

enjoys perfect surroundings, and feels very British – and I love British golf.

Anyone would love Les Bordes. You drive along thinking, 'where the heck is the course?!'

You are in the middle of a forest two hours from Paris – it is perfect serenity. It is a very hard course, American in style with some island greens.

Morfontaine I also like very much but I prefer Les Bordes. I also love Chantilly – again, very English while Saint Germain, St Nom La Breteche are also good.

Golf du Medoc is a great

resort with good practice areas – I go every day when I am at home. The Vignes in the winter is ideal as it is not too long – the Chateau in winter is huge! We have fun on the Vignes. On the Chateau, to be three-under you have to play fantastic. I like to go to enjoy courses.

Golf du Medoc is more natural and simple than others, and the

Lapasset training centre is excellent; it didn't cost as much as Terre Blanche, although I know Levy and Jacquelin love it. A hidden gem? Try Lyonnais.


France is very lucky to have these courses. We should talk about them more often.

■ **2007 Scottish Open champion Gregory Havret has played in over 400 European Tour events.**



5 Valderrama (▲3)

Sotogrande, Spain

 +34 956 791 200, valderrama.com. Par 71, 6,951 yards. Robert Trent Jones Snr.


CB Famously tricky experience among umbrella pines, but I love Valderrama; as much fun as you can have on an inland championship course as you manufacture so many shots. In my top 3.

GW With conditioning back to its peerless best, Valderrama was easy to move up. It is probably 'the' experience of Continental golf. Magnificent.



4 PGA Catalunya (Stadium) (▲1)

Girona, Spain

 +34 972 472 577, pgacatalunya.com. Par 72, 7,204 yards. Gallardo & Coles.

PG Deserves a place in the top five, although for the average player it's a formidable prospect: long, hilly in places and with some awkward angles into devilishly sloping greens.

GW VERDICT 2022 Ryder Cup hopeful is a modern championship course whose changes in elevation offer some spectacular tee shots.



2 Les Bordes (▼1)

Orleans, France

 lesbordes.com. Par 72, 7,008 yards. Robert von Hagge & Rick Baril.

HJW I cannot think of a more difficult course. But it is of course outstanding too. I had much fun and the greens are out of this world. Great.


CB A special place; as difficult as it is beguiling and as immaculate as it is hazardous.

GW A class apart along with our new No.1, classy Utrecht and possibly a resurgent Valderrama.



3 Utrecht de Pan (▲23)

Utrecht, Netherlands

 +31 306 956 427, ugc-depan.nl. Par 72, 6,651 yards. Harry Colt.

CB One of the nicest surprises I've enjoyed on a golf course. I knew it was good – as per a mid-20s ranking in 2013 – but not this good. A heathland to rival ours and comfortably the Netherlands' best course in my view.

GW VERDICT 'De Pan' rose nine spots last time and 23 this time. It could very easily have been nine and 25. It would be a very worthy No.1 and it is difficult to imagine a scenario when it is out of the top three. Exquisite.

GW VERDICT

WHY 'DE PAN' DESERVES THIS ELEVATED POSITION

In several Top 100 rankings it has lurked in the mid 20s – but this time we're confident Utrecht has its rightful placing.



One of the many great joys of being a golfer is when a course surpasses the pre-round expectations you had for it.

Often it goes the other way of course, and a highly-anticipated round on a much-hyped venue fails for some reason to ignite your enthusiasm.

But we quite rightly always remember for longer the ones that pleasantly surprised us.

De Pan fell into the happy, former category for me, and

although its elevation to No.3 increases the chances of you having your hopes disappointed when you play it, I am confident it won't let you down.

It really is that good.

Why has it taken us (and not just us, it must be said) so long to recognise its quality? Well for one because the Dutch themselves widely regard the courses by the sea in their country as superior.

As this ranking has consistently suggested, while we recognise those seaside courses as high-quality affairs, we also (especially

now) rate extremely highly the courses of a heathland nature.

It would not surprise me if the heathlands made further inroads into the top 20 of the list in 2017.

De Pan, though, will surely remain as the Netherlands' premier heathland. The others are excellent, but it has a significant touch of extra class.

For my money, it is one of only three courses on the Continent – possibly four if Valderrama continues its renaissance – that has a claim to the No.1 spot in this biennial ranking.

It is true I have many more Continental courses to play, although very few in the top 30 – so if something does emerge as a contender for No.1, it will certainly have surpassed expectations.

If it overshadows De Pan, it will have to be a magical experience, for this heathland could stand stern comparison with all but probably Sunningdale Old among Surrey and Berkshire's elite.

The beauty, the tranquility, the pines, the heather, the gentle examination; De Pan is not flattered by No.3. **Chris Bertram**

1 Morfontaine (▲1)

Paris, France

+33 344 546 827, golfdemorfontaine.fr.

Par 72, 6,633 yards. Tom Simpson/Kyle Phillips.

CB It does not take long to realise Morfontaine is mesmerising. Negotiate the electronic gate that ensures Morfontaine remains the preserve of the Parisian elite and you set eyes immediately on a heathland scene that brings joy to the heart of any lover of traditional golf courses. Pines, wide fairways lined by heather and old-fashioned bunkering give this course on the northern outskirts of Paris an aristocratic feel to match its thatched-roof clubhouse that screams 'this place is all about the course'.

We often talk about courses being 'comparable with the jewels of Surrey and Berkshire in this Top 100', no mean compliment given the calibre of the Sunningdales, Walton Heaths, Berkshires et al. Morfontaine doesn't just deserve a place alongside these stellar names, it usurps many of them.

GW VERDICT The first time Morfontaine has reached No.1. Rather like Royal County Down, which only reached the top spot in 2012, it feels as if this could be a fixture rather than a fleeting fancy. Morfontaine is comfortably better than all but perhaps two or three others. Oh, and the nine-hole Valliere is fabulous too.

WINNING COMBINATION

"Having played extensively in the UK and Ireland I was interested to see how Continental Europe compared. Morfontaine was undoubtedly the pick, a delightful very private members-only course. It has a great sense of tranquillity with a varied and interesting layout that winds through well-established forest. Combined with the French overlay it compares very favourably to the UK's top private courses."

Gary Lisbon, world-renowned golf photographer

EXCLUSIVE

THE MAJESTY OF A SIMPSON MASTERPIECE

Kyle Phillips recalls the pleasure he took in helping our new No.1 remain a challenge as well as a beautiful portrait.



I had never played the course before being engaged as a consultant, but I had walked it, so I knew what a majestic site I was being asked to look at.

I was very respectful of the course and what Tom Simpson had done. It was interesting that even though the membership of

the club are getting older, they came to me and said that they are hitting the ball longer now and the course's land forms were now not in play enough.

It's still a relatively short course but we just wanted to bring the land forms back into play; while somewhere like Valderrama has trees, they have the sand dunes and heather.

How it all comes together is a big part of how the course plays.

Simpson was at Morfontaine a lot and he himself actually changed the whole routing from the way he started it. It was fascinating to see how he changed it from his first configuration, with hole 10 initially No.1, a jump from 8 over to 11 and the 13th wasn't there

either. The direction of the dog-leg on the 14th has changed too. So we are reluctant to change an architect's original work and yet he was doing it himself right up to when he died. I wondered if he was around today, would he have been going around Morfontaine adding length!

■ Kyle Phillips is one of the world's leading architects.

WHERE TO FIND THE NEW TOP 100

We've plotted the location of the courses in our refreshed ranking of the Continent's elite to help you plan your Top 100 golf breaks.

- 1 Morfontaine, Paris, France
- 2 Les Bordes, Orleans, France
- 3 Utrecht de Pan, Utrecht, Netherlands
- 4 PGA Catalunya, Girona, Spain
- 5 Valderrama, Sotogrande, Spain
- 6 Royal Hague, The Hague, Netherlands
- 7 Royal Zoute, Cadix, Belgium
- 8 Fontainebleau, Paris, France
- 9 Noordwijkse, Leiden, Netherlands
- 10 El Saler, Valencia, Spain
- 11 Kennemer, Haarlem, Netherlands
- 12 Chantilly, Paris, France
- 13 Terre Blanche (Chateau), Fayence, France
- 14 Monte Rei, Tavira, Portugal
- 15 Golf du Medoc (Châteaux), Bordeaux, France
- 16 Bro Hof Slott, Stockholm, Sweden
- 17 Golf National, Paris, France
- 18 Oitavos Dunes, Cascais, Portugal
- 19 Troia, Lisbon, Portugal
- 20 Hilversumsche, Hilversum, Netherlands
- 21 Onyria Palmares, Lagos, Portugal
- 22 Budersand, Sylt, Germany
- 23 Hamburger, Hamburg, Germany
- 24 Falsterbo, Malmö, Sweden
- 25 Lubker, Nimtofte, Denmark
- 26 Sevilla, Seville, Spain
- 27 Hadelot (Les Pins), Hadelot, France
- 28 San Lorenzo, Almaraz, Portugal
- 29 Praia d'El Rey, Obidos, Portugal
- 30 Finca Cortesin, Málaga, Spain
- 31 Sporting Club Berlin, Schmutzelsee, Germany
- 32 Penha Longa (Atlantico), Lisbon, Portugal
- 33 Eindhoven, Eindhoven, Netherlands
- 34 The Scandinavian (Old), Farum, Denmark
- 35 Ravenstein (Old), Tervuren, Belgium
- 36 El Prat (Rosa), Barcelona, Spain
- 37 Sotogrande (Old), Sotogrande, Spain
- 38 Saint Germain, Paris, France
- 39 PGA National (Lakes), Malmö, Sweden
- 40 Sperone, Corsica, France
- 41 Royal Park, Torino, Italy
- 42 Son Gual, Majorca, Spain
- 43 LykiaLinks, Belek, Turkey
- 44 Oceanico (Old), Vilamoura, Portugal
- 45 Rosendaelsche, Netherlands
- 46 Seignosse, Landes, France
- 47 Santander, Madrid, Spain
- 48 Barseback (Masters), Malmö, Sweden
- 49 Villa d'Este, Montorfano, Italy
- 50 The Scandinavian (New), Farum, Denmark

- 51 Domaine Imperial, Geneva, Switzerland
- 52 Golf du Medoc (Vignes), Bordeaux, France
- 53 Sand, Jönköping, Sweden
- 54 Biella, Magnano, Italy
- 55 PGA National (Links), Malmö, Sweden
- 56 Antalya (PGA Sultan), Belek, Turkey
- 57 Royal Obidos, Obidos, Portugal
- 58 Quinta do Lago (South), Almaraz, Portugal
- 59 Kongsvinger, Granli, Norway
- 60 Verdura (East), Sicily, Italy
- 61 Esbjerg, Jutland, Denmark
- 62 Limburg, Houthalen, Belgium
- 63 Halmstad, Halmstad, Sweden
- 64 Carya, Belek, Turkey
- 65 Bled, Bled, Slovenia
- 66 Le Touquet (La Mer), Le Touquet, France
- 67 Neguri, Algorta, Spain
- 68 Vasatorps (Tour), Helsingborg, Sweden
- 69 Castelconturbia, Via Suno, Italy
- 70 Puerto de Hierro (Arriba), Madrid, Spain
- 71 Chiberta, Landes, France
- 72 Villa de Madrid (Black), Madrid, Spain
- 73 Fontana, Oberwaltersdorf, Austria
- 74 Cornelia (Prince), Belek, Turkey
- 75 Abama, Tenerife, Spain
- 76 La Reserva de Sotogrande, Sotogrande, Spain
- 77 Crans sur Sierre, Crans-Montana, Switzerland
- 78 Las Colinas, Alicante, Spain
- 79 Las Brisas, Marbella, Spain
- 80 Thracian Cliffs, Kavarna, Bulgaria
- 81 Kytaja (South East), Hyvinkää, Finland
- 82 Steiermarkischer, Murhof, Austria
- 83 St Nom La Breteche (Red), Paris, France
- 84 Costa Navarino (Dunes), Messinia, Greece
- 85 Estonia G&CC, Tallinn, Estonia
- 86 Holstebro (Forest), Brandsbjergvej, Denmark
- 87 Moliets, Landes, France
- 88 Winston (Championship), Schwerin, Germany
- 89 Oceanico Faldo, Vilamoura, Portugal
- 90 Penati (Heritage), Bratislava, Slovakia
- 91 San Roque (Old), Sotogrande, Spain
- 92 Quinta do Lago (North), Almaraz, Portugal
- 93 La Manga (West), Murcia, Spain
- 94 Linna, Hameenlinna, Finland
- 95 Waterloo (La Marache), Brussels, Belgium
- 96 Royal Antwerp, Antwerp, Belgium
- 97 Hossegor, Landes, France
- 98 Montgomerie Maxx, Belek, Turkey
- 99 The Dutch, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 100 Aroeira 1, Lisbon, Portugal



THE NEXT 100

There is significant movement in this country-by-country guide to the 101-200 bracket – and we also offer an insight into the 30 courses that were under closest consideration for elevation to the main list.

The New course at Salobre in Gran Canaria is a breathtaking track in a desert-like environment.

AUSTRIA

Adamstal

Eichenheim Breathtaking views and a cerebral Kyle Phillips design equals one of the strongest contenders to enter the Top 100. Eichenheim would be in the 101-105 bracket – that's how good this mountainous course is. (CB)

BELGIUM

Royal Des Fagnes

BULGARIA

Black Sea Rama

DENMARK

Falster

Fanø Denmark's only links course. Short and quirky but always a lot of fun. (TV)

Hvide Klit

Lyngbygaard

Royal Copenhagen

Rungsted

Sct Knuds An old classic course with holes in the woods as well as by the sea. There is something for everyone. (TV)

Silkeborg (Forest) My No.1. This course will test your game. With tall trees, large undulated greens and dog-legs, you have to be on top of your game. (TV)

Skjoldenæsholm

FINLAND

Kytjä (North West)

Nordcenter (Fream) I really think Nordcenter deserves to be in the Top 100. A few years after its renovation (€3million+) it is in fantastic condition. A partly hilly course with great sea views, if Nordcenter Fream was anywhere in Great Britain, it would be much higher (and far above all Estonian courses). Condition wise it is just perfect; the only drawback is its location. The clubhouse, Åminne manor, is in a class of its own in Finland. In addition to golf, it offers access to the sea and high-class accommodation.

FRANCE

Barbaroux

Belle Dune

Cannes Mougins

Chateau de Taulane

Chantilly (Longeres)

Dinard

Evian

Granville

Nordcenter (Fream) was very close to making the main list.



Joyenval (Marly)

Kempferhof

Les Aisses Three fine loops with our preference for the Rouge and Blanc nines. One of the strongest contenders for the Top 100, this Olivier Brizon design was tweaked by Martin Hawtree five years ago. A majestic woodland experience that sits to the south of Orleans (which is Les Bordes country, so gives you an inclination as to the ambience here). (CB)

Pleneuf-val-Andre

Terre Blanche (Le Riou)

GERMANY

Cologne

Frankfurter The manifold challenges of game management and precision of strikes are rarely bettered than at Frankfurt. And for more than 90 years. No wonder, with an architect like HS Colt, the course is cut so well through dense forest. Great definition, dog-legs and slightly undulating greens make this golf in its traditional form. The fact these wooded, waterless fairways in the immediate vicinity of the main landmarks of the city of skyscrapers is another surprise. (HJ-W)

Gut Lärchenhof

St Leon-Rot (St Leon)

Winston Golf (Open)

GREECE

Costa Navarino (Bay) Fifteen minutes from the Dunes is the Trent Jones course which has even more amazing views than its sister. For uninterrupted beauty the Bay course could be in Western Province as you gaze out to the ocean.

ICELAND

Keilir (Hvaleyrarvöllur)

ITALY

Bogogno (Bonora)

Bogogno (del Conte)

Donnafugata (Links)

Golf Nazionale

Milano

Pevero

Torino

Verdura (West) One of the most unfortunate courses to miss out on selection. Possibly subconsciously it suffers from having its sister course already in the 100. We are reassessing the West in 2016; the feeling by many is that it is Top 100 class, with the only proviso that the Phillips design is being maintained to the highest level.

PORTUGAL

Aroeira 2

Estella They say it's Portugal's links course, but it is not. It's a beautiful course just located alongside the beach. A challenge especially in the windy days. The course you have to know in the north of Portugal. (JVP)

Furnas The ultimate golf experience in the heart of the Atlantic. Situated in the volcanic Azores Islands, this is an idyllic perfect location. The enormous cryptomeria trees and the perfect design of the greens makes Furnas one of the best in all of Portugal's territory. (JVP)


Oceanico (O'Connor)

Palheiro

Penina

Porto Santo

Quinta da Marinha

Quinta da Ria Golf is also about fun. This is an accessible design for those who want to enjoy 

Emporda (Forest) found lots of support with Spanish experts.



the game – in one of the most beautiful traditional landscapes of Algarve. (JVP)

Quinta de Cima

Quinta do Lago (Laranjal) One of the key contenders to come into the list, Laranjal mixes strong holes with sporty 4s and the absence of residential development is another strong factor in its favour. A bit detached from the main Vilamoura action, but beautifully serene. (CB)

Quinta do Peru

Ribagolfe Host of European Tour qualifying, it is referred to as the 'Valderrama of Portugal' with good reason. Created out of a cork oak forest by Peter Townsend and EGD it meanders in tranquility with no residences in sight. Ribagolfe II by Michael King and EGD is also excellent. (CB)

Santo da Serra Home of the Madeira Island Open, there are 27 holes of pure beauty and challenge on the mountains and cliffs. In some holes you actually feel above the clouds. (JVP)

Vale do Lobo (Ocean)

Vidago Palace Fabulous olde worlde retreat with a characterful and opulent restored palatial home; a wonderful base for a short break centred on this English-feeling parkland.

Vila Sol

NETHERLANDS

Domburg

Laage Vuursche

Noord Brabantse

Swinkelsche

The International

NORWAY

Miklagard

Oslo

POLAND

Modry Las

Sand Valley Very different from most modern designs; it is not a links by any stretch of imagination, yet it will play as firm as any course you will come across. Crazy width off the tee (some target areas are 100+ meters wide), interesting angles, massive rollercoaster greens and loads of other cool features. It will take you a few rounds to even start understanding what you're supposed to be doing. If that kind of golf is your thing, you'll love it.

SLOVAKIA

Penati Resort (Legend) Big-boned, Nicklaus-designed course set down in the same majestic sand-based forest as new Top 100 entry the Heritage. Arguably has the more consistent site and is consistently visually superb. (CB)

SPAIN

Alcanada The home course of the Porsche family in the pretty Majorcan town of Alcudia, it is very close to joining Son Gual in the Top 100. One of our most eager re-assessments in 2016, Alcanada can boast wonderful views and terrific Robert Trent Jones-routed holes. (CB)

Aloha

Anfi Tauro Immense Gran Canaria course that is almost crazily tough while also offering fabulous Atlantic and volcanic views. Don't miss it. (CB)

Bonmont

Emporda (Forest) Nicely balanced, even if a couple of the par 5s and par 3s are similar. (PG)

Emporda (Links)

Golf La Moraleja no 3. A Nicklaus masterpiece piece in one of the best golf clubs in Spain. (JAL)

Lumine (Hills) The lower-profile course at 36-hole Lumine but in my view clearly the better one. Greg Norman's Lakes is a solid test but the Hills has bags of charm and a handful of holes that would be at home in the top 50. (CB)

Pedrena

PGA Catalunya (Tour) Like Verdura West, probably suffers from being sister to the Stadium. On its own, could easily be in there. Even with its sister, might make it in 2017 – slick modern, well-balanced course. (CB)

Platja de Pals

Puerto del Hierro (Abajo) One of the oldest clubs in Spain and totally private. Great Trent Jones redesign for the 'Abajo'. (JAL)

Real Sociedad Hípica Club de Campo Robert von Hagge's North Course is for sure one of the top courses in Spain. (JAL)

Salobre (New) Would be categorically in the main list but for three holes that essentially march up, down and up the side of a steep hill. Those holes just lose it too many marks to get in, which is a shame because the other 15 are truly awesome, Arizona-style fare. Indeed, many golfers will play it and struggle to understand why it hasn't made the main list. (CB)

San Roque (New) Uber tough second track that

makes you feel claustrophobic as you try to thread your drives between the avenues of trees. The area's best greens too. (CB)

Ulzama

SWEDEN

Bro Hof Slott (Castle)

Hills

Ljunghusens

Ullna Landscaped by Sven Tumba and refined by Jack Nicklaus. After renovation and refurbishment it has become a little bit more difficult but has been met with nothing but praise. Lots of water in play. (TJ) The 2013 upgrade by Jack Nicklaus is a good one. (BL)

Six holes go by lake Ullna and are a really fantastic experience for all golfers. It is an excellent course but you can tell it is new made.

Vallda A Martin Hawtree design outside Gothenburg from 2009 that has determinedly fought their way up to the Swedish top 10. (TJ)

Visby On the island of Gotland, it has been out of the discussion due to a minor catastrophe – a parasite/salt water in the irrigation system meant the course almost died – but that course is top three under normal circumstances. It should be on the list. Redesigned by Pierre Fulke/Adam Mednick a few years ago, just by the sea. (TJ)

Opened in 1959 but fully restored, the sea and pines makes this course very special. (BL)

SWITZERLAND

Ascona I actually prefer Ascona in Ticino to the very private Golf Club of Geneva. The main reason for my choice is the Mediterranean flair and the vegetation, combined with an excellent maintenance. (FC)

Bad Ragaz

Golf Club de Geneva

Golf Sempachersee

Lausanne

TURKEY

Antalya (Pasha)

Gloria (Old) The star attraction at this 45-hole venue, which is one of the most popular in Belek. In amazing condition and plenty of entertaining woodland-parkland golf. (CB)

National The original course in Belek and still one of the best. Would just sneak in a personal Top 100 for its design merit and lack of fuss. ■

• **Vidauban was not considered for either list as it has not been played by enough panellists.**

TWO FOR 2017?

Pärnu Bay is the first links-style seaside course in Estonia and is about to open. Designed by Lassi Pekka Tilander, the early feedback we have received has been immense. And as you could see, it looks the part. We look forward to investigating whether it – plus Tom Doak's new course at Saint Emilionnais near Bordeaux, France – are Top 100 material for the 2017 list. ■ **More about Pärnu Bay on p14.**

