

**GOLF  
WORLD**

**TOP**

**100**

**MODERN  
COURSES**

**THE GROVE**  
HERTFORDSHIRE

**THE MOST AUTHORITATIVE  
RANKINGS IN THE GAME**

**100 MODERN CLASSICS**

Ranking and rating the best European courses  
to have opened over the last 30 years





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# WELCOME

A glance down our recent Top 100s of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales suggests that golf course architecture completely lost its way for 60 years. Our lists (and others like them, not just ours) scream out that: most of the best courses were created before 1930; there were very, very few good ones built in the subsequent six decades; and that for some time there has been an encouraging number of new ones opening.

The stat in the middle is stark because other than Turnberry, nothing great was built in this period. In contrast, the trend over the past three decades has been entirely and increasingly uplifting.

These new courses are, of course, up against all the classics in GB&I rankings, as well as the highly competitive England and Scotland lists. So we thought it was time to recognise them in their own ranking of courses to open in the past 30 years.

Only those built from 1991 on were considered and we did not include any redesigns, even though some courses have been overhauled in this period so significantly that they are essentially new.

The trend towards excellence in new courses has become increasingly strong; three of the top 15 opened within the past 12 months.

So whereas in the 60 years of doom – as well as, it must be said, among lots of other courses to open in the '90s – just constructing a course was deemed a success. Now it has to be really good to make it worthwhile.

We discuss specific architectural issues with some key designers in a fascinating feature on page 141, but there is no doubt the focus now is on fun, interest, playability and entertainment in new courses. In contrast, it wasn't all that long ago that the emphasis was on challenge verging on masochism.

The good news is that this trend of excellence will continue. Golf is happily

thriving right now, but developers know only top-class new courses will succeed. We don't lack for quantity of golf courses in this country, but high-calibre new ones will do well.

So, how did we create this ranking? We took eligible courses from our rankings of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, plus Continental Europe, and standardised their marks (because those individual rankings have their own specific panels). I then fitted them all together as lots are on the same mark. I have played 93 of the 100, so am very much to blame/praise for anything you think is good/bad in this ranking.

Whatever you think of the order, and no-one will ever agree with it, I do hope it is viewed as a celebration of a renaissance in course design which we are all benefiting from.

That will continue to be the case as we all enjoy the fruits of what I believe is a second Golden Age of Architecture.

**Chris Bertram, Top 100 Editor**



Old Head, Ireland



# 1

## KINGSBARNS ST ANDREWS, SCOTLAND

Design **34** Setting **14** Memorability **13**  
Playability **8** Consistency **8** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 85**

Kyle Phillips' masterpiece from 2000 is our first Modern Courses No.1, and a very worthy one at that. This Fife course is one of those rarities in golf; a course that no-one seems to dislike. Of course, not every golfer has it among their absolute favourites, but whenever we do a ranking – and across the various panels it qualifies for – Kingbarns is universally popular. So while some have it among their top three in GB&I, few have it outside their top 10.

We have long felt Phillips was one of the best architects at getting the most from a site. At places like The Grove and Penha Longa he turned relatively unpromising canvasses into Top

100-calibre courses. Here, he had a stretch of coastline to work with, which is hardly a bind, but it was also fairly bland farmland. The wonders of modern construction meant that could be turned and shaped into a sandy seaside course.

It is not as pure a links as some elsewhere in Fife perhaps, but the ball bounds along its firm fairways in exactly the way you'd want it to.

Kingsbarns' strengths are a wonderful aesthetic appeal that is married to a wonderful balance of playability and challenge encapsulated in varied holes that live long in the memory. It's a recipe for a course you want to go back to time and again.

# 2

## TRUMP ABERDEEN ABERDEEN, SCOTLAND

Design **34** Setting **14** Memorability **14** Playability **7**  
Consistency **8** Presentation **8** **TOTAL 85**

So close to the No.1 spot – just look at how close the marks are between Trump Aberdeen and Kingbarns.

This Martin Hawtree course opened to the sound of some controversy in 2016, partly as a result of its owner and partly because of environmental concerns. We judge it on the course that is there for us to play... and we very much like it.

Hawtree was given the most breathtaking site to work with and there is no doubt this is a course you don't forget in a hurry. It has holes and moments you will recall instantly in 10 years' time.

It is indubitably exacting, with the number of elevated tees combined with the

coastal winds meaning you simply must choose tees that allow you to hit clubs you feel comfortable with; if you have to hit full-out driver here every time, you are either a very strong player or you like losing balls.

It is in its best-ever shape, playing properly linksy, which is a credit to the greens staff and commitment of the whole club to making it the best it can be.

It arguably lacks a little of the nuance that could have made it *even* better, and in the 10th and 18th it has holes not all will love, but if you go here with an open mind and you aren't blown away at several points, we will be surprised. A 'must play' course in any context you care to place it.

# 3

## ARDFIN ESTATE ISLAY, SCOTLAND

Design **35** Setting **14** Memorability **14** Playability **6**  
Consistency **8** Presentation **8** **TOTAL 85**

The story behind Ardfin is as intriguing as the course. Built by an Australian hedge fund wizard who bought this estate on the tiny island of Jura, it took a superhuman effort to create a course at this rocky, hilly, seaside location. The result is breathtakingly good. Opened finally in 2020, we have had a number of panellists play here and all raved about it. This eyebrow-raising position – on the back of its 11th in our Scotland list – shows how highly we rate it. We don't think it has hit its peak, either. Few courses anywhere in the world beat it for setting and Bob Harrison has done a wonderful job of creating a playable layout in the most staggering setting imaginable.



# 4

## SKIBO CASTLE DORNOCH, SCOTLAND

Design **34** Setting **14** Memorability **13** Playability **6** Consistency **8**  
Presentation **9** **TOTAL 84**

Skibo opened in 1995 and thus qualifies for this ranking, but we are really rating the second iteration of this Highland links that emerged some two decades later.

Tom Mackenzie, when working for Donald Steel, created the initial course and it was perfectly good, but the overhaul at the start of the last decade by one half of the Mackenzie & Ebert firm, in association with Director of Golf David Thomson, has made it into a GB&I top 20 course rather than 'just' a course that gets into the 100.

Another truly epic setting is allied to a course presented without flaw. It is certainly a serious test but the removal of gorse has made it infinitely more playable. Happily, limited tee times are available and while they are not cheap, this truly is a bucket-list course.



# 8 ROSAPENNA (ST PATRICK'S) DOWNINGS, IRELAND

Design **34** Setting **13** Memorability **13** Playability  
8 Consistency **8** Presentation **7** **TOTAL 83**

Straight into this lofty position for Rosapenna's brand-new Irish links, which opened literally weeks ago. We got a pre-play look at St Patrick's and fell in love with it. An instant Tom Doak masterpiece, and as its understandably raw presentation naturally improves and it settles in to its gorgeous seaside landscape, it will be rated even more highly. In two years, only a handful in Ireland will be better; it's that good.



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## 5 CASTLE STUART INVERNESS, SCOTLAND

Design **34** Setting **14** Memorability **12**  
Playability **8** Consistency **7** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 83**

Gil Hanse made his mark in Europe and on the architecture scene with Castle Stuart in 2009. This was when this Tom Doak disciple gained his spurs. It lets you swing freely off the tee, but there is always a better side from where to approach the green. Another wonderful location.



## 6 LOCH LOMOND HELENSBURGH, SCOTLAND

Design **33** Setting **14** Memorability **13**  
Playability **8** Consistency **8** Presentation **7**  
**TOTAL 83**

The setting is the thing here, of course it is. Build a course on the bonnie banks and it couldn't be anything but gorgeous. But the Tom Weiskopf design from 1995 adds a lot, and after huge investment over the past 18 months, it plays beautifully throughout the year. Would be a worthy top five course.



## 7 ADARE LIMERICK, IRELAND

Design **33** Setting **12** Memorability **12**  
Playability **9** Consistency **7** Presentation **10**  
**TOTAL 83**

Qualifies for the list as it was opened in 1995, but if we were marking that course it would be in the 50s of this ranking. Instead, Tom Fazio's overhaul has turned it into a course that lives in this elite company; forgiving off the tee, demanding around the green, a delightful setting and in peerless condition.

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THE GROVE 

# LONDON'S INSPIRING COUNTRY ESCAPE

Set in 300 acres of tranquil Hertfordshire countryside, it's difficult to believe that The Grove – complete with a Top 100 ranked championship golf course – is just 18 miles from central London.

Famed for its year-round pristine condition and recognised for the quality of its putting surfaces, the 18-hole course remains the only UK venue to have ever hosted a World Golf Championship event (in 2006), won in spectacular fashion by Tiger Woods. Ten years later, it was the stage for The British Masters on the European Tour, hosted by Luke Donald, with competitors praising the pedigree of the course during tournament week.

"The greens are probably the best greens we've had so far on the European Tour, bar the Middle East. For England at this time of year, they've done an amazing job." – Robert Rock.

"Visually, The Grove is a spectacular golf course. If you are hitting the ball well,

it gives you a lot of birdie chances and certainly, on the few times I have been here, the course has been in fantastic condition. This week is no different." – Lee Westwood.

"I have to say that the course is in pristine condition. The fairways are firm, the greens are firm and the ball rolls really well. The playing conditions couldn't be better." – Ryder Cup legend and former Masters Champion, José María Olazábal.

Guests who visit The Grove this year will discover the results of an extensive project. As well as the renovation of all 90 bunkers and a 200m<sup>2</sup> extension to the putting green, the hotel and grounds have been redesigned to bring a new lease of life to this remarkable country estate. Led by award-winning interiors studio, Martin Hulbert Design, the remastered interiors incorporate three dining areas – The Glasshouse, The Stables and the Lounges – as well as the lobby and bedrooms.

Besides the lure of the golf course,

residents are spoilt for choice when it comes to activities. A far cry from the confines of London, they can hop aboard Segways to explore Asher's Woodland Trails, take part in exhilarating outdoor pursuits such as archery and even take a dip in the shimmering heated swimming pool. For adult-only relaxation, Sequoia spa offers all manner of heat experiences and spa treatments to melt away tension.

Anna Darnell, Resort Leisure Director, commented: "We pride ourselves on the service we offer our guests and the world-class facilities and experiences we extend to everyone, whether you are visiting for a weekend break, a special occasion with family, or teeing it up with golfing friends. We may have hosted the finest players in the game but our ethos of allowing everyone to play, without restriction, extends to all, whether you are trying the sport for the first time, seeking some expert golf tuition, or simply enjoying quality leisure time with loved ones."





# 12

## LOFOTEN

🇳🇴 LOFOTEN, NORWAY

Design **30** Setting **15** Memorability **15**  
Playability **6** Consistency **7** Presentation **7**  
**TOTAL 80**

In a list of sensational settings, this tops the lot. Seriously. It is Aviemore meets Turnberry... and then some. It was developed over many years but the current course was finalised in 2015, the work of Englishman Jeremy Turner. There are some design compromises and it befuddles you to start with (leading to many lost balls), but this is riotous fun and jaw-droppingly beautiful no matter which direction you are facing – be it out to sea or looking in, towards the mountains. The pilgrimage to get there arguably makes it feel even more special.



### 9 TRUMP DOONBEG

🇮🇪 KILKEE, IRELAND

Design **32** Setting **13** Memorability **13**  
Playability **8** Consistency **8** Presentation **7**  
**TOTAL 81**

Built by Greg Norman in 2002 and we really enjoyed that original course. It's since been changed by Martin Hawtree, especially the greens, and it remains a very fine links. Coastal erosion has robbed this Clare links of its infamous short hole, but there are still plenty of highlights – not least the all-world par-5 opener.



### 13 OLD HEAD OF KINSALE

🇮🇪 KINSALE, CORK

Design **30** Setting **15** Memorability **14**  
Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 81**

Old Head splits opinion, as you will have read before. Opened in 1997, if you enjoy thrilling carries, dramatic holes and Insta-worthy scenes, you will love it and feel it should be top five in this list. If you are a design connoisseur, you'll think it should be in the 30s. Unquestionably spectacular.



### 16 ROSAPENNA (SANDY HILLS)

🇮🇪 DOWNINGS, IRELAND

Design **32** Setting **12** Memorability **12**  
Playability **7** Consistency **9** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 80**

While playing the new St Patrick's Links in June, we also checked out Sandy Hills and concluded this Pat Ruddy design from 2003 has never been in better shape in terms of conditioning and added width. We were really, really, impressed – look for it to do well in future lists. What a No.2 to have!



### 10 THE EUROPEAN

🇮🇪 BRITTAS BAY, IRELAND

Design **33** Setting **12** Memorability **13**  
Playability **6** Consistency **9** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 81**

Pat Ruddy is one of golf's great characters and after making his mark on numerous stellar courses, he got to build his own. That happened in 1993 and The European has made plenty of noise since. 'Exacting' barely does it justice for you're tackling one of the world's most demanding links. A top 10 position is the least it deserves.



### 14 BALLYLIFFIN (GLASHEDY)

🇮🇪 BALLYLIFFIN, IRELAND

Design **33** Setting **12** Memorability **12**  
Playability **7** Consistency **8** Presentation **9**  
**TOTAL 81**

Pat Ruddy and Tom Craddock created this bold, muscular links in 1995 and you will find few better tests of your game in Great Britain and Ireland. A firm, fast-running links, it demands that you play well. Presented by people who know what a links course should play like.



### 17 THE RENAISSANCE

🇸🇬 GULLANE, SCOTLAND

Design **33** Setting **12** Memorability **12**  
Playability **7** Consistency **8** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 80**

Tom Doak's Scottish links opened in 2007 next door to Muirfield. It might not be the American's most celebrated work, but the new home of the Scottish Open is a touch of class. Consistently good, with the addition of new coastal holes – and work with Doak and Padraig Harrington promises much.



### 11 MACHRIHANISH DUNES

🇸🇬 CAMPBELTOWN, SCOTLAND

Design **33** Setting **12** Memorability **13**  
Playability **7** Consistency **9** Presentation **7**  
**TOTAL 81**

Can it really be 12 years since Machrihanish Dunes opened its doors to the world?! It was 2009 when David McLay Kidd unveiled his minimalist design on the Mull of Kintyre. In those dozen years it has matured impressively, an easy-to-love example of how golf used to be, full of sporty par 4s and cute short holes.



### 15 DUMBARNIE

🇸🇬 UPPER LARGO, FIFE

Design **31** Setting **13** Memorability **13**  
Playability **9** Consistency **8** Presentation **7**  
**TOTAL 81**

Another strong ranking for Dumbarnie on the back of its notable 'Scotland' and 'Fun' positions. This Clive Clark design opened last year and is wide, forgiving and so easy to enjoy. You can't have a bad day here, no matter your particular preferences. Oh, and did we mention the 360-degree views?



### 18 MONTE REI

🇵🇹 TAVIRA, PORTUGAL

Design **31** Setting **12** Memorability **12**  
Playability **7** Consistency **9** Presentation **9**  
**TOTAL 80**

Jack Nicklaus opened this course in the east of the Algarve in 2007 and it is regarded as one of continental Europe's finest. It is every inch the modern championship venue and manicured to perfection. A second course is being developed at this upscale venue by Nicklaus.





## 19 ST ANDREWS (CASTLE)

🇸🇬 ST ANDREWS, SCOTLAND

Design **32** Setting **12** Memorability **12**  
Playability **7** Consistency **8** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 79**

Another McLay Kidd design, the Castle opened to huge expectation in 2008, as it was the first course to be built in St Andrews for more than 100 years. Kidd's acutely funky greens and rough-covered mounds in fairways didn't find favour initially, but it's getting due recognition now.



## 21 PGA CATALUNYA (STADIUM)

🇪🇸 GIRONA, SPAIN

Design **32** Setting **7** Memorability **13**  
Playability **8** Consistency **9** Presentation **9**  
**TOTAL 78**

A consistently good parkland course that would have been a very fine Ryder Cup venue had it got the matches in two years' time. This 1999 design by Angel Gallardo and Neil Coles is demanding but also gives you something back on several holes. It is also in superb condition.



## 23 PARNU BAY

🇪🇪 PARNU, ESTONIA

Design **31** Setting **9** Memorability **13**  
Playability **7** Consistency **9** Presentation **9**  
**TOTAL 78**

Lassi Pekka Tilander was given an enviable site on the edge of the Baltic and produced this European masterpiece in 2015. Parnu looks enticing with its aerial shots and it is as appealing to play in reality; wide corridors between tall pines, sandy firm playing surfaces and funky greens.



## 20 DUNDONALD

🇸🇬 IRVINE, SCOTLAND

Design **33** Setting **7** Memorability **13**  
Playability **8** Consistency **9** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 78**

Opened in 2006 as the sister course to Loch Lomond to give members a winter bolt hole. This Kyle Phillips creation oozes links quality. It doesn't have the seaside views of others in this list, but it is consistently excellent throughout and a real golfer's golf course. Investment is making it even better.



## 22 WEST CLIFFS

🇵🇹 OBIDOS, PORTUGAL

Design **31** Setting **9** Memorability **13**  
Playability **7** Consistency **9** Presentation **9**  
**TOTAL 78**

The new superstar of Portuguese golf, this Cynthia Dye creation opened in 2017 a few miles inland from sister course Praia D'El Rey. It mixes breathtaking views of the Atlantic with strong par 4s, cute par 3s and strategic par 5s. Playability mark relatively lower as it's demanding off the tee.



## 24 JCB CLUB

🇬🇧 UTTOXETER, ENGLAND

Design **32** Setting **7** Memorability **13**  
Playability **7** Consistency **9** Presentation **9**  
**TOTAL 77**

The owners wanted a course capable of hosting the world's elite. They have done that, without a doubt, but the wide selection of tees means golfers of all standards can enjoy it. However, with water on many holes and well protected, sloping greens, you'll need to be on your A game to score well.



## 25 SAINT EMILIONAIS

🇫🇷 BORDEAUX, FRANCE

Design **33** Setting **7** Memorability **13**  
Playability **7** Consistency **9** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 77**

Tom Doak's first venture in continental Europe opened close to Bordeaux in 2016 and within the first three holes you are seduced by its sporty par 4s and delightful short hole. As strategic as you'd expect, it is improving all the time as it settles down. Will challenge for the continental top 30.



## 26 LOUGH ERNE

🇮🇪 ENNISKILLEN, NORTHERN IRELAND

Design **31** Setting **8** Memorability **13**  
Playability **8** Consistency **8** Presentation **9**  
**TOTAL 77**

A prominent position for this Northern Irish course, finished by Sir Nick Faldo in 2007. We think it deserves more affection than it sometimes gets, because it enjoys a lovely lake-side setting, incorporates some exciting and clever holes, and is in superb condition. Only Adare is better inland in Ireland.



## 28 WOBURN (MARQUESS)

🇬🇧 MILTON KEYNES, ENGLAND

Design **32** Setting **8** Memorability **12**  
Playability **8** Consistency **8** Presentation **9**  
**TOTAL 77**

Ross McMurray added the third 18-holer at Woburn in 2000 and in many eyes it quickly became the No.1. They are all very evenly matched but the Marquess is undoubtedly one of the finest modern courses in GB&I, characterised by sweeping fairways between the trademark towering pines.



## 29 BUDERSAND

🇩🇪 SYLT, GERMANY

Design **31** Setting **9** Memorability **13**  
Playability **8** Consistency **8** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 77**

This is an intriguing links course on the popular holiday island of Sylt, off the coast of Denmark but a part of Germany. Laid out on an old military base by Rolf-Stephan Hansen in 2008, it features pot bunkers, sandy turf and a feeling of a proper Scottish links. It really looks the part, too.



## 27 THE GROVE

🇬🇧 WATFORD, ENGLAND

Design **32** Setting **7** Memorability **12** Playability **8** Consistency **9**  
Presentation **9** **TOTAL 77**

Another entry for Kyle Phillips, this parkland course north of London opened in 2003 and has hosted the World Golf Championship and the European Tour. Phillips made a superb job of producing a constantly interesting inland course – and it is in wonderful condition every week of the year. The bunkering has had a successful facelift, adding aesthetic appeal and strategic merit. One of England's finest inland courses.





### 30 BRO HOF SLOTT (STADIUM) 🇸🇪 STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

Design **30** Setting **9** Memorability **14**  
Playability **7** Consistency **8** Presentation **9**  
**TOTAL 77**

Robert Trent Jones Jnr, with his trusted sidekick Bruce Charlton on site throughout, created this water-dominated, thrill-a-minute parkland in 2007. The closing stretch is as dramatic as almost anything in continental Europe, with water lurking over pretty much every swing.



### 34 GLENEAGLES (CENTENARY) 🇸🇪 AUCHTERARDER, SCOTLAND

Design **31** Setting **9** Memorability **13**  
Playability **8** Consistency **7** Presentation **9**  
**TOTAL 77**

The Ryder Cup course at this super-resort was opened in 1993 and has had a history in terms of tucks and tweaks. We always feel it is a little under-appreciated as a result of its proximity to the King's and Queen's, because this is a fine modern moorland complete with gorgeous views.



### 37 CELTIC MANOR (2010) 🇨🇾 NEWPORT, WALES

Design **31** Setting **8** Memorability **13**  
Playability **8** Consistency **8** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 76**

The host of the 2010 Ryder Cup was built by Ross McMurray with thrilling matchplay in mind, so you can expect risk-reward holes and an emphasis on excitement and memorability. One of Wales' finest, it has that X Factor of playing somewhere special, 11 years after the European victory.



### 32 ARCHERFIELD (FIDRA) 🇸🇪 GULLANE, SCOTLAND

Design **33** Setting **8** Memorability **12**  
Playability **8** Consistency **7** Presentation **9**  
**TOTAL 77**

DJ Russell created the Fidra in 2004 in the hotbed of East Lothian. It opens with holes lined by tall pines and then emerges into open linksland. Quality and playable throughout, if it wasn't among East Lothian's giants it might be more highly regarded, because it is top class.



### 35 OITAVOS DUNES 🇵🇹 CASCAIS, PORTUGAL

Design **30** Setting **9** Memorability **13**  
Playability **8** Consistency **8** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 76**

Laid out by Arthur Hills in 2001 on the edge of the coastal town of Cascais, 45 minutes west of Lisbon, Oitavos has a wonderfully undulating site and fabulous views of the Atlantic Ocean. It is one of the Continent's top 40 courses, even if the feeling is a little more could have been made of it.



### 38 PRAIA D'EL REY 🇵🇹 OBIDOS, PORTUGAL

Design **30** Setting **9** Memorability **14**  
Playability **8** Consistency **7** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 76**

Cabell Robinson set down this popular holiday course in 1997 and although residences now line the side of some fairways, it remains an aesthetic delight. The trees among pines are enjoyable and sometimes quirky, while the oceanside stretch is absolutely phenomenal.



### 33 CARYA 🇹🇷 BELEK, TURKEY

Design **31** Setting **8** Memorability **12**  
Playability **8** Consistency **9** Presentation **9**  
**TOTAL 77**

The course we rate as the finest of a very strong collection in Belek. It was laid out by Thomson, Perrett & Lobb in 2008 – with Tim Lobb continuing to make astute refinements today. Heathland in look, with heather, white sand bunkers and mature pines, it is a real class act.



### 36 BEARWOOD LAKES 🇬🇧 WOKINGHAM, ENGLAND

Design **32** Setting **8** Memorability **12**  
Playability **8** Consistency **8** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 76**

Modern parklands haven't done well in our rankings of late, with our panels preferring the generally quirkier style of older courses, so this is a welcome chance to show we rate venues such as Bearwood very highly. Tranquil, varied, fun, immaculate and playable, it is a delightful place to play.



### 39 REMEDY OAK 🇬🇧 WIMBORNE, ENGLAND

Design **31** Setting **8** Memorability **12**  
Playability **8** Consistency **9** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 76**

John Jacobs' 2005 design sweeps between tall pines and is the modern parkland-woodland classic among Dorset's age-old heathlands. A multiple England Top 100 entry, in terms of presentation, there is a feeling of grandeur about this inland course that just keeps on improving.



## 31 TERRE BLANCHE (CHATEAU) 🇫🇷 NICE, FRANCE

Design **31** Setting **8** Memorability **12** Playability **8**  
Consistency **9** Presentation **9** **TOTAL 77**

The key golf attraction at the resort we believe is the No.1 in continental Europe. Dave Thomas's 2000 design tumbles over typical Provencal countryside that provides a delightful canvas for the game. Always in immaculate condition, the views of the surrounding countryside and wafts of lavender that line the fairways make this a thoroughly delightful experience.



### 40 THE SCANDINAVIAN (NEW) 🇩🇰 COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

Design **33** Setting **7** Memorability **11**  
Playability **7** Consistency **9** Presentation **9**  
**TOTAL 76**

We rate this marginally the better of the two Robert Trent Jones and Bruce Charlton creations at this high-end Danish club. There is a little more nuance to the New that for us gives it the edge, but there is so little to choose between them. Built to a high spec and maintained extremely impressively.



### 41 ARCHERFIELD (DIRLETON) 🇸🇪 GULLANE, SCOTLAND

Design **33** Setting **7** Memorability **11**  
Playability **8** Consistency **9** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 76**

In contrast to its sister course, the Fidra, which begins in pines, Archerfield's No.2 is purely on open linksland. If it was in almost any other country it would be one of the top courses, but it gains less glory than it might as it is in Scotland. This DJ Russell links is seriously good, though.



### 42 THE DUKE'S 🇸🇪 ST ANDREWS, SCOTLAND

Design **33** Setting **8** Memorability **11**  
Playability **8** Consistency **8** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 76**

Opened to coincide with the 1995 Open at nearby St Andrews, it was designed by Peter Thomson and Ross Perrett with later amendments by Tim Liddy. It is the heathland alternative in the Auld Grey Toun and is playable and varied with attractive views from its lofty location.



# ‘MODERN COURSES ARE JUDGED HARSHLY BECAUSE THEY ARE JUDGED TOO QUICKLY’

Three leading designers – with 10 courses to their name in this Top 100 – come together to discuss a possible new Golden Age of course design...

St Patrick's Links, Ireland

**Why did we lose our way so badly between 1930 and 1990 when, by any reckoning, few great courses were built in Europe?**

**Tom Doak** Depression and recovery from the war consumed the period from 1930-1960. After that, there weren't many designers left who remembered how to build a great course.

**Ross McMurray** The depression and long-term impact of World War II were no doubt significant factors to the limitations on golf development through to the end of the 1950s. Added to which there were not that many golf course architects playing their trade at this time, and most of the architects from the Golden Age were no longer practising. There was some fine work carried out in the 1960s, though. El Saler, El Prat, Sotogrande and Las Brisas in Spain alone, for instance.

**Lassi Pekka Tilander** Probably small and simple (design) was left in the background when large earthmoving machines made it

possible to build courses on any kind of land. Although advanced maintenance equipment was a real help, especially around the greens – after all, there are some real gems from that era such as El Saler (1968) in Spain and Troia in Portugal (1979).

**Are we now seeing a second Golden Age of course architecture around the world?**

**TD** The information age has given a lot more people a chance to learn from the great courses, and demand better of designers. But it's still a question of whether the economy supports their development.

**RM** I think we have been in another Golden Age for the last 20 years or so. There are some fantastically talented designers who have come through during this period. I do believe the standard of course design is better now than ever before, helped by increasing professionalism and education within the industry.

**LPT** It is important to consider environmental issues and this actually pushes us towards minimalist design and construction of the early 20th Century. It has also been noticed that the courses of that time were, and still are, fun to play. Yes, it can be said that the second Golden Age is here, but with a 21st Century twist.

**What is or are the modern trend or trends in course architecture?**

**TD** Minimalism has been the trend, because it's both retro and it dovetails with the need for sustainable development. But a new trend is long overdue. It's just up to some designer to start it.

**RM** There's definitely been a move towards a more natural character, away from the style often seen in the '80s and '90s, which sometimes led to designers forcing a particular style onto the landscape. I expect the natural style to continue as we increasingly take on

board environmental sensitivities and promote sustainable courses that lower the maintenance costs.

**LPT** The trend is towards more strategic design. Instead of length, the challenges of the game are created with well-placed hazards as well as diverse green areas. Shorter courses and well-designed practice facilities are becoming more popular.

**Do you design differently now – whether in the process or the style of courses you produce – compared to when you started out?**

**TD** The process is the same – come up with a strong routing, and then get out there and work on the details. Experience has made us better at the details. I like to think we can build in any style we want – my crew has a lot of practice from restoring others' courses.

**RM** I'm sure I do, although the basic design process remains the same for me. It's still pencil

and paper before anything heads towards a computer! What changes is experience, knowledge and confidence, which hopefully means your designs are constantly improving.

**LPT** Each work begins on a blank canvas. It is clear that after 20 years, the vision of what is a good course has changed. As a creative person, I have absorbed influences first as a player and later as a designer. That's a process that continues as long as you live.

**Are modern courses assessed more harshly compared to the historic ones and, if so, why do you think that is?**

**TD** New courses are being compared to the best of everything that has come before and I think modern courses are judged harshly because they are judged too quickly – when people see a controversial feature, they decide immediately whether it's good or bad, instead of giving it some time to prove itself in

play. First impressions aren't always right, but the goal of getting a new course into a Top 100 list the day after it opens brings a lot of pressure with it.

**RM** I think there is definitely something in this. There are modern courses with few if any weak holes which purely on their design standard could be rated higher. I suppose they fall down on the quality of the site or lack of history. Perhaps modern designs also miss out on elements of quirkiness which many older courses, on more natural sites, retain. Maybe we're occasionally guilty of trying to make things too perfect.

**LPT** The saying that a course is never ready will, of course, give an advantage to old courses. That doesn't mean all the old courses are great. However, when they're well-maintained and skilfully reconstructed, the old classics still have a feeling that is harder for newer courses to achieve.





## 43 MOUNT JULIET

🇮🇪 KILKENNY, IRELAND

Design 33 Setting 7 Memorability 11  
Playability 7 Consistency 9 Presentation 9  
**TOTAL 76**

A World Golf Championship venue and one of the best-conditioned inland courses in this list, Jack Nicklaus-designed Mount Juliet is the epitome of a modern championship venue. Until Adare's remake, this vied with Lough Erne as Ireland's top inland course. Big, bold and brawny.



## 47 SPEY VALLEY

🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 AVIEMORE, SCOTLAND

Design 31 Setting 9 Memorability 13  
Playability 7 Consistency 8 Presentation 8  
**TOTAL 76**

This Aviemore course opened in 2006 and may well be our favourite piece of work by Dave Thomas, whose legacy stretches as widely as The Belfry to Terre Blanche. Here, Thomas added in some lovely touches to his usually stringent design – and the setting is predictably fabulous.



## 50 VERDURA (WEST)

🇮🇹 SICILY, ITALY

Design 32 Setting 8 Memorability 12  
Playability 8 Consistency 7 Presentation 8  
**TOTAL 75**

The East is usually given top billing at this opulent Sicilian resort, but we marginally prefer the West. Kyle Phillips designed both and allocated similar stretches of the coastal site to each. The West has a little more movement in the fairways and greens and we enjoy its variety of holes. Top quality.



## 44 THE SCANDINAVIAN (OLD)

🇩🇰 COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

Design 33 Setting 7 Memorability 11  
Playability 7 Consistency 9 Presentation 9  
**TOTAL 76**

The Old course here by a matter of months, and every bit as good as the New (No.40), it was also deigned by the Robert Trent Jones-Bruce Charlton axis. An enjoyable journey across undulating land lined by mature trees and with the occasional water hazard, the Old oozes class and tour-calibre appeal.



## 48 LUBKER (SAND & SKY)

🇩🇰 NIMTOFTE, DENMARK

Design 33 Setting 7 Memorability 11  
Playability 7 Consistency 9 Presentation 8  
**TOTAL 75**

The 'Sky', 'Sand' and 'Forest' loops are very hard to split at this Danish resort, but we narrowly prefer the Sand and Sky nines. All were designed with typical solidity by Robert Trent Jones, and offer a tranquil round and solid architecture. In good condition and notably consistent.



## 51 FINCA CORTESIN

🇪🇸 CASARES, SPAIN

Design 31 Setting 7 Memorability 11  
Playability 8 Consistency 8 Presentation 10  
**TOTAL 75**

This Costa del Sol course has risen in our affections following a multi-million pound revamp of its greens. It is now conditioned like few others in Europe. Cabell Robinson did a fine job of laying out this parkland in 2007 on what was an undulating and, in places, difficult site.



## 45 THRACIAN CLIFFS

🇧🇬 CAPE KALIAKRA, BULGARIA

Design 30 Setting 10 Memorability 14  
Playability 7 Consistency 7 Presentation 8  
**TOTAL 76**

This Bulgarian clifftop course has taken a little while to edge up our rankings because there were initial concerns about consistency of conditioning. Now allayed, we have no qualms about saying this is one of the most breathtaking courses in Europe, modern or otherwise. A truly epic setting.



## 49 PORTMARNOCK HOTEL

🇮🇪 DUBLIN, IRELAND

Design 32 Setting 8 Memorability 12  
Playability 7 Consistency 8 Presentation 8  
**TOTAL 75**

Bernhard Langer with Ross McMurray created this Dublin links – next door to the world-famous one – in 1995. It's the real deal, offering a mix of holes among dunes coming home, as well as those on rippling, open fairways. Never been in better condition either, and a super location.



## 52 PENHA LONGA (ATLANTICO)

🇵🇹 ESTORIL, PORTUGAL

Design 32 Setting 8 Memorability 12  
Playability 8 Consistency 8 Presentation 7  
**TOTAL 75**

Kyle Phillips again, this time 40 minutes from Lisbon, on the outskirts of Estoril. The American really excelled here, producing a course of real highlights without any tedious uphill or downhill holes – which could so easily have been the case on such an undulating site.



## 46 THE K CLUB (NORTH)

🇮🇪 STRAFFAN, KILDARE

Design 31 Setting 8 Memorability 13  
Playability 8 Consistency 8 Presentation 8 **TOTAL 76**

The 2006 Ryder Cup venue was designed by Arnold Palmer in 1991 and is a parkland set down on gently undulating land with water providing moments of tension, especially on the final stretch. It's in great nick and has the experience factor.



## 53 DRUIDS GLEN

🇮🇪 NEWTOWNMOUNTKENNEDY, IRELAND

Design 32 Setting 7 Memorability 11  
Playability 8 Consistency 8 Presentation 8  
**TOTAL 74**

Well-groomed parkland-woodland south of Dublin that has hosted the Irish Open. Its title as 'The Augusta of Europe' is a little far fetched, but it undoubtedly offers a delightful experience as you walk its manicured fairways between mature trees. Enough thrill to get in the 50s of this list.



## 54 CARTON HOUSE (MONT'IE)

🇮🇪 MAYNOOTH, IRELAND

Design 33 Setting 7 Memorability 11  
Playability 7 Consistency 8 Presentation 8  
**TOTAL 74**

This Irish Open host is a big-boned championship course to the west of Dublin. Designed by Colin Montgomerie, his preference for bunkers that are serious penalties is obvious and while they are penal, there is a really lovely golf course among the mature parkland here.



## 55 CHART HILLS

🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 BIDDENDEN, ENGLAND

Design 31 Setting 7 Memorability 12  
Playability 8 Consistency 8 Presentation 8  
**TOTAL 74**

We like to be totally transparent with our rankings and admit this is a position we are less sure of, simply because this Nick Faldo original from 1993 has undergone a huge revamp under new owners, the McGuirks. Only two panellists have seen it since then, but say it is really good. Watch this space...



# 57

## VERDURA (EAST)

🇮🇹 SICILY, ITALY

Design **32** Setting **8** Memorability **11**  
 Playability **7** Consistency **8**  
 Presentation **8** **TOTAL 74**

Kyle Phillips has returned to Sicily to remodel the East following freak storm damage, with renovations and a rerouting – scheduled for completion in October. The new 9th on the coast is poised to be one of the stars of the new course and we can't wait to assess the new-look East. "The drama of the coastline has been improved, so we have made the most of it," says Phillips. "One of the things that we didn't have before – but have now – is a double green, a bit like some of the huge greens at St Andrews. It will be the new 8th (par 5) and new 10th (par 4) which will share a green."



## 56 SPORTING CLUB (FALDO)

🇩🇪 BERLIN, GERMANY

Design **30** Setting **7** Memorability **12**  
 Playability **8** Consistency **9** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 74**

This German super resort is home to a bewildering number of holes, but we think Sir Nick Faldo's 1996 layout is the best of the lot. It's an open course but with 133 bunkers it is one of the toughest in Germany, so not for the faint-hearted. A strong course that is undoubtedly one of Germany's best.



## 58 EL PRAT (ROSA)

🇪🇸 TERRASSA, SPAIN

Design **32** Setting **7** Memorability **11**  
 Playability **7** Consistency **8** Presentation **9**  
**TOTAL 74**

Greg Norman designed 45 holes here when this historic club moved north of Barcelona from its location close to the airport in 2003. The Rosa is our preferred combination of the loops, four of which are very close in quality as well as in their stringent nature as they weave between mature woodland.



## 59 SEVILLA

🇪🇸 SEVILLE, SPAIN

Design **32** Setting **7** Memorability **11**  
 Playability **8** Consistency **8** Presentation **8**  
**TOTAL 74**

A Jose Maria Olazabal design from 1991, our panel found it a little uninspired with not enough exciting holes to be a truly elite course. Nevertheless, it's one of the finest courses in Spain and even though it didn't quite catch the imagination of the panel, it remains a fine modern parkland.

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## 60 GOLF DU MEDOC (VIGNES) FRANCE

Design 33 Setting 7 Memorability 11  
Playability 8 Consistency 7 Presentation 8  
**TOTAL 74**

Just gets in this list as it opened in 1991, two years after its sister. Not quite as good as the Chateaux, but has the same kind of Walton Heath hallmarks after a start among woodland-parkland. Really classy design by Rod Whitman, the design associate of the revered Bill Coore.



## 63 LA RESERVA SPAIN

Design 32 Setting 7 Memorability 12  
Playability 8 Consistency 7 Presentation 8  
**TOTAL 74**

Cabell Robinson has a strong presence in this Top 100 and here is another example of his expertise in routing a course on land that could not be considered ideal for a golf course. La Reserva is consistently high class and offers stirring views from its elevated tee shots. In impeccable condition now, too.



## 66 RAEVO RUSSIA

Design 31 Setting 7 Memorability 12  
Playability 6 Consistency 8 Presentation 9  
**TOTAL 73**

We have started to get a grasp on Russia's courses and this is the one we regard as its best. A classic Jack Nicklaus design which opened in 2019 and is one of the continent's best-conditioned courses. Expect bold bunkers, big greens and a championship feel to this course south-west of Moscow.



## 61 LAS COLINAS SPAIN

Design 31 Setting 7 Memorability 11  
Playability 9 Consistency 8 Presentation 8  
**TOTAL 74**

Cabell Robinson did something so obvious but more rare than it should be here – he designed Las Colinas for the average golfer, not the tour pro. So all the bunkering and water hazards are in the right spots for you and I, not Bryson. Some gettable holes too, so you feel good about your game here.



## 64 CLOSE HOUSE (COLT) ENGLAND

Design 33 Setting 8 Memorability 11  
Playability 8 Consistency 6 Presentation 8  
**TOTAL 74**

There was a course here much earlier and while we have resisted the temptation to include redesigns, however extensive, we believe this to be a completely new course after being laid out by Scott MacPherson, a student of Harry Colt's work. The nuance on the Colt is the key to this position.



## 67 PGA NATIONAL (LINKS) SWEDEN

Design 32 Setting 7 Memorability 12  
Playability 7 Consistency 7 Presentation 8  
**TOTAL 73**

Much the better of the two courses at this Swedish resort, this one was designed in 2009 by, guess who, Kyle Phillips. It has the look of a links – especially when sunshine highlights the undulating fairways – even if the grasses are not fescue. Can get firm and run fast too and there are some fine holes.



## 62 SON GUAL SPAIN

Design 31 Setting 7 Memorability 11  
Playability 7 Consistency 9 Presentation 9  
**TOTAL 74**

Designed by German architect Thomas Himmel in 2007, Son Gual ticks every box of a modern championship parkland. Tees, fairways and greens are in wonderful condition. Prolific bunkering and water hazards line the routes to large, undulating putting surfaces. Just a strong all-rounder.



## 65 PGA NATIONAL TURKEY TURKEY

Design 30 Setting 7 Memorability 13  
Playability 6 Consistency 8 Presentation 9  
**TOTAL 73**

The Sultan was the first course in Belek to host the game's big names, including Tiger, and it's a proper test for even the best. Off ill-suited tees its water hazards and relatively narrow fairways will be a battle for many, but it is indubitably a high-class course – few are better presented in this list.



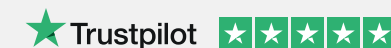
## 68 THE CENTURION ENGLAND

Design 34 Setting 7 Memorability 11  
Playability 7 Consistency 6 Presentation 8  
**TOTAL 73**

Opened in 2013 near St Albans, this private club's course was designed by Simon Gidman, formerly with Martin Hawtree. It begins in mature pines, a la Woburn, and then emerges into open parkland. A good variety of holes in both phases and a high level of quality throughout.



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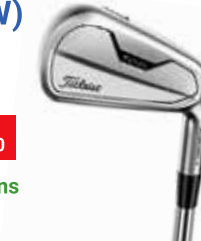
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## 69 SAND VALLEY

🇵🇱 GDANSK, POLAND

Design **33** Setting **7** Memorability **12** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **7** **Total 73**

This Lassi Pekka Tilander routing, with later input by Tony Ristola, opened in 2009 and is a heathland-parkland of rare character. The routing is superb and while the greens are at times very funky, we really like it.



## 70 PENATI (HERITAGE)

🇸🇰 BRATISLAVA, SLOVAKIA

Design **33** Setting **7** Memorability **12** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **7** **Total 73**

Jonathan Davison was given the lesser land at Penati – Nicklaus Design enjoyed the prime stuff – but he produced the more interesting course. Opened in 2013, Heritage has echoes of classic architecture.



## 71 GREAT NORTHERN

🇩🇰 KERTEMINDE, DENMARK

Design **32** Setting **7** Memorability **11** Playability **7** Consistency **8** Presentation **8** **Total 73**

The latest Scandinavian superstar opened in 2017, another Nicklaus Design creation. Seven artificial lakes were created in the making of this big-boned course, located in Kerteminde, in the centre of Denmark.



## 72 ROYAL OBIDOS

🇵🇹 OBIDOS, PORTUGAL

Design **31** Setting **8** Memorability **11** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **8** **Total 72**

Seve Ballesteros' final design, Royal Obidos opened in 2012 in this popular golf destination an hour north of Lisbon. It was very well constructed, has some delightful views and a nice mix of holes. Fine all-round quality.

**73 KYTAJA (SOUTH EAST)**  
🇫🇮 HYVINKAA, FINLAND  
Design **31** Setting **8**  
Memorability **12** Playability **7**  
Consistency **6** Presentation **8**  
**Total 72**

Finland has more good golf than you would expect and this is the best of the two 18-holers at this fine resort. Opened in 2003 by Thomas McBroom, it is currently having a revamp. Awesome, varied scenery.



100



## 74 THE NATIONAL

🇹🇷 BELEK, TURKEY

Design **32** Setting **7** Memorability **10** Playability **7** Consistency **8** Presentation **8** **Total 72**

The first course to open in Belek, and we think it is still one of the best. This David Jones design from 1994 oozes class and some enjoyable notes of classic architecture. In terrific condition, it gives 'resort golf' a very good name.

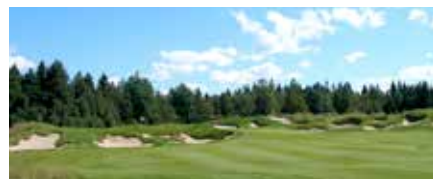


## 75 FONTANA

🇦🇹 VIENNA, AUSTRIA

Design **30** Setting **8** Memorability **12** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **8** **Total 72**

Opened for play in 1996, the Doug Carrick and Hans-Georg Erhardt course is part of an upscale residential resort. Much earth was moved to create lakes and shape the fairways and surrounds. It has hosted the Austrian Open several times.



## 76 SAND

🇸🇪 JONKOPING, SWEDEN

Design **31** Setting **7** Memorability **12** Playability **7** Consistency **8** Presentation **7** **Total 72**

A former potato field turned into a Continental Top 100 course by Hills & Forrest. The earth from the lakes they added was used to manufacture ridges and dunes and helped create one of the most memorable rounds in Sweden.



## 77 COSTA NAVARINO (DUNES)

🇬🇷 KALAMATA, GREECE

Design **31** Setting **8** Memorability **10** Playability **7** Consistency **8** Presentation **8** **Total 72**

Ross McMurray helped Bernhard Langer design this championship-quality course at this world-class Greek resort. It has some scenic highs, especially on the 2nd, but this is actually more of a technically proficient course to appreciate.



## 78 LES AISSES

🇫🇷 ORLEANS, FRANCE

Design **32** Setting **7** Memorability **11** Playability **7** Consistency **8** Presentation **7** **Total 72**

Olivier Brizon's design here opened in 1992 but was updated by Martin Hawtree in 2006, when some of the more eccentric features were softened. Don't make that lead you to think it is boring, though, for this heathland course has lots of appeal.



## 79 SWINKELSCHÉ

🇳🇱 EINDHOVEN, NETHERLANDS

Design **33** Setting **7** Memorability **10** Playability **7** Consistency **8** Presentation **7** **Total 72**

Frank Pont is known as a master restorer of classics, but this proves the Dutchman can create them too. A heath course that doesn't beat you up, Pont used the site astutely to create a high number of quality holes and green sites.



## 80 BRO HOF SLOTT (CASTLE)

🇸🇪 STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

Design **33** Setting **7** Memorability **10** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **8** **Total 72**

Bro Hof's thrilling Stadium course along Lake Malaren gets all the attention, but the Castle further inland has more charm. Attractive waste area bunkering and gorgeous green sites combine with rock outcrops to offer a round of real character.



## 81 FAIRMONT ST ANDREWS (TORRANCE)

🇸🇬 ST ANDREWS, SCOTLAND

Design **29** Setting **9** Memorability **12** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **7** **Total 71**

This clifftop course on the outskirts of the Auld Grey Toun is marginally the better of its two 18-holers. Opened in 2001, it features stirring views from its lofty fairways. A Scottish Top 100 fixture.



## 82 WISLEY (CHURCH & GARDEN)

🇬🇧 WOKING, SURREY

Design **30** Setting **7** Memorability **11** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **9** **Total 71**

Surrey is famed for its heathlands, but here is a parkland that can live in that company. The Wisley's three loops were designed in 1991 by Robert Trent Jones Jnr and the third nine, the Mill, is just as good as the two we have selected.



## 83 CORNELIA (KING)

🇹🇷 BELEK, TURKEY

Design **30** Setting **7** Memorability **11** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **9** **Total 71**

Another entry for Sir Nick, who made a fine job, along with his team, of using the undulating land to produce holes of real character. Greens are nicely perched atop ridges and the layout flows really well. The three loops here are all very similar.



## 84 MACHYNYS PENINSULA

🇨🇾 LLANELLI, WALES

Design **30** Setting **8** Memorability **11** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **8** **Total 71**

Nicklaus Design created this water's edge course near Llanelli in 2005 and it is doing very well in our Wales ranking, the panel enjoying its mix of thrilling holes and more stringent ones. In good condition and with some super views.



## 85 COSTA NAVARINO (BAY)

🇬🇷 KALAMATA, GREECE

Design **27** Setting **9** Memorability **13** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **8** **Total 71**

A decade ago, Robert Trent Jones opened what is regarded as the second course at the resort that will soon be Europe's No.1. It is so different to the Dunes, being all about views – we reckon you see the bay from all but one hole. Gorgeous.



## 86 LINNA

🇫🇮 HAMEENLINNA, FINLAND

Design **29** Setting **8** Memorability **12** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **8** **Total 71**

Tim Lobb, while working for European Golf Design, laid out this Finnish course in 2005 and it is a fixture in our Continental Top 100. It travels over often distinctly undulating land and between towering pines to create a tranquil test.



## 87 FAIRMONT ST ANDREWS (KITTOCKS)

🇸🇬 ST ANDREWS, SCOTLAND

Design **29** Setting **9** Memorability **12** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **7** **Total 71**

Opened in 2001, this is all but as good as the Torrance (including the views), and is part of a fabulous resort with a superb hotel. Laid out on similar land to its sister, it incorporates stone walls in a design of impressive variety.



## 88 MELDRUM HOUSE

🇸🇬 ABERDEEN, ABERDEENSHIRE

Design **30** Setting **7** Memorability **11** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **9** **Total 71**

A 1998 design by Graeme Webster that is gaining good traction in our recent Scottish Top 100s. Noted for its world-class conditioning, there are also some clever green complexes to enjoy as well as water on 10 holes to keep you focused.



## 89 GORKI

🇷🇺 ST PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

Design **30** Setting **7** Memorability **12** Playability **8** Consistency **7** Presentation **7** **Total 71**

A Lassi Pekka Tilander creation distinct from other Russian courses as it doesn't try to beat you up. It is elegant, charming and full of fun half-holes. When running firm and the mowing lines pushed back to give width, it's Continental Top 100 class.



## 90 CRAIGIELAW

🇸🇬 GULLANE, SCOTLAND

Design **29** Setting **8** Memorability **12** Playability **7** Consistency **8** Presentation **7** **Total 71**

Donald Steel and Tom Mackenzie designed this addition to East Lothian's portfolio in 2001. It follows undulating fairways towards greens that often feature run-offs and are protected by pot bunkers. A Scottish Top 100 fixture.





## 91 MILL CREEK

🇷🇺 ST PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

Design **29** Setting **7** Memorability **12** Playability **7** Consistency **8** Presentation **8** **Total 71**

Laid out by Ross McMurray, the club has a Kaleidoscope concept that allows for five courses to be configured from its 18 holes. We are marking it on the standard layout and it is a very fine, firm and fast-running course in impeccable condition.



## 92 AMENDOEIRA (O'CONNOR)

🇵🇹 ALCANTARILHA, PORTUGAL

Design **29** Setting **8** Memorability **11** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **8** **Total 70**

We rate this Christy O'Connor design just above sister course, the Faldo, which goes against the grain. We just like its extra forgiveness and fun factor. Wonderfully conditioned, the green fairways stand out beautifully against the arid surroundings.

## THE RANKING IN NUMBERS

- 49** The number of Continental European courses.
- 7** The number of courses by Kyle Phillips.
- 6** The number of Scottish courses in the top 10.
- 7** The number of Portuguese courses.
- 19** The number of Scottish courses – England 10, Ireland 13, Wales 3.



## 93 THE CARRICK

🇸🇬 HELENSBURGH, SCOTLAND

Design **29** Setting **9** Memorability **12** Playability **7** Consistency **6** Presentation **7** **Total 70**

Doug Carrick opened The Carrick in 2007 and while its location on the bonnie banks gives it some epic holes, the Canadian had his work cut out routing it over some tricky land. So while it lacks consistency, there are literally lots of highs.



## 94 MACREDDIN

🇮🇪 WICKLOW, IRELAND

Design **30** Setting **7** Memorability **11** Playability **8** Consistency **7** Presentation **7** **Total 70**

Paul McGinley's first course design opened in 2007 and is now getting the credit it deserves, finishing well above many big names in our Ireland Top 100. Clever and characterful course of different phases, all of them impressive.



## 95 THE ROXBURGHE

🇸🇬 KELSO, SCOTLAND

Design **30** Setting **8** Memorability **11** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **7** **Total 70**

The pride of the Borders, this Dave Thomas course opened to great fanfare in 1997. It is part of a small but wonderful resort, and this strong parkland is consistently good throughout. Highlight arrives on the spectacular Viaduct hole.



## 96 WINSTON LINKS (CHAMPIONSHIP)

🇩🇪 VORBECK, GERMANY

Design **29** Setting **7** Memorability **13** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **7** **Total 70**

David Krause's 'faux links' splits opinion. It makes no apologies for being man made, sitting among parkland, so feels a little overshaped and artificial. But lots will like the peak dunes and distinctiveness.



## 97 LONDON CLUB (HERITAGE)

🇬🇧 BRANDSHATCH, ENGLAND

Design **30** Setting **7** Memorability **12** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **7** **Total 70**

Jack Nicklaus finished it in 1994 and it is one of England's best-presented modern courses. Its sister, the International, was close to this list too, but the Heritage offers a little more consistency, with many of the stand-out holes those involving water.



## 98 MONTGOMERIE MAXX

🇹🇷 BELEK, TURKEY

Design **30** Setting **7** Memorability **11** Playability **7** Consistency **7** Presentation **8** **Total 70**

A Colin Montgomerie and European Golf Design creation that has hosted the European Tour. Lacks a touch of the fizz of Belek's No.1, Carya, but is a fine modern parkland that is always in sensationally good nick.

## 99 THE OXFORDSHIRE

🇬🇧 THAME, OXFORDSHIRE

Design **30** Setting **7** Memorability **12** Playability **6** Consistency **7** Presentation **7** **Total 69**

Opened in 1993, a time when golf course design was more about challenge than anything else, The Oxfordshire was even a test for the European Tour pros when it hosted them. But this Rees Jones layout has enough to entertain you and I, and that's why it sneaks into this very competitive list.



## 100 VALE RESORT (NATIONAL)

🇬🇧 CARDIFF, WALES

Design **29** Setting **7** Memorability **12** Playability **6** Consistency **8** Presentation **7** **Total 69**

Peter Johnson design from 2003 that goes through different phases – notably from playing among woodland to more open parkland. Expect a very long test off the back tees and plenty of water hazards as well as bunkers.