

The Ultimate Tee-Off

Take your golf game to new heights and tee off in the most challenging, most exclusive and most elusive golf courses in the world, with the finest accessories to augment your style, if not your golf game

For the Aspiring Golf Professional

You know it's a tough course when professional golfers complain of its difficulty. This was exactly the case with the TPC Stadium Course in California, USA, (www.pgawest.com), with some of the most difficult moguls, swales and bunkers to overcome. Pit your skills against one of the world's most challenging courses, created by Pete Dye, and navigate through the plethora of hazards, especially on the 17th and 18th hole. Rated by several publications to be one of the toughest courses in the world, as well as once being dropped from being the PGA Tour's Bob Hope Desert Chrysler Classic course because it was too challenging, this course is the ultimate test for the advanced golfer (green fees at about US\$235, though it varies throughout the year) to conquer and be labelled against the greats. Should you prevail, enter the PGA Tour "Q School" Finals to land the coveted PGA Tour Card.

Another course designed by Pete Dye, known for his "Dye-bolical" designs, is the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island Golf Resort (www.kiawahresort.com) in South Carolina, USA. In true Dye fashion, the Ocean has the highest combination of Slope Rating (155) and Course Rating (79.6) in the US, according to the US Golf Association. This course features forced carries over marshes, roll-resistant Bermuda grasses and a seemingly endless array of waste bunkers. After multiple mishaps by the golf professionals in the 1991 Ryder Cup, the course was nicknamed Looney Dunes. The course is best played walking through it in the morning, to avoid the howling winds. It's also made its big screen debut in the film *The Legend of Bagger Vance* in 2000 alongside celebrity actors like Matt Damon and Will Smith and will be the host for the 2012 PGA Championships.



Kalos Golf Ocean liner



Orion II Cabin



Bespoke Travels with Connoisseur Golf



Augusta National Golf Club

luxurious stays
and beautiful
sights await on the
Helicopter Golf in
Scotland

For The Luxurious Travel Golfer

If your purpose is to take in the sights and sounds of an unfamiliar area while teeing off in the most divine courses in the world, prepare to be escorted to multiple destinations for a whirlwind trip by helicopter to the best golf courses in Scotland or sail away in a truly luxurious and unexpected golf cruise.

Luxurious stays and beautiful sights await on the Helicopter Golf in Scotland (www.connoisseurgolf.com) tour (at around US\$15,000 per trip in April to October) which will arrange seven private helicopter trips to personally escort you to some of the best courses in Scotland, if not the world. These include a guaranteed tee time on perhaps the most famous golf course, the Old Course at St Andrews, as well as Turnberry, Kingsbarns, The New Course, Royal Dornoch, Gleneagles, Royal Troon and the legendary Carnoustie course, which gave rise to the coining of the “Carnoustie effect” when the world’s best players could not make par on the course. Aside from this, golfers will also be given personalised Galvin Green Gore-Tex Jackets and pants, accommodation at the opulent Fairmont St Andrews and Turnberry Resort,

and their very own chauffeured Mercedes with concierge and driver. An unforgettable golfing experience beckons you.

Setting sail in Southeast Asia, the British Isles, New Zealand and to other parts of the world, the Southeast Asia Golf Cruise (www.kalosgolf.com) combines the best of sightseeing and the best golf courses to truly delight the sightseeing golfer. The cruise covers courses in Angkor Wat, Cambodia and Vietnam, with an option to explore the courses in Bangkok, Thailand before the cruise properly starts, where you’ll be one of only 90 guests onboard the cruise. You’ll get to tee off in courses designed by golfing legends like Nick Faldo and Greg Norman at the Ocean Dunes Golf Club and Danang Golf Resort, tour iconic locations and live in stylish luxury on the Orion II. For a truly enjoyable and luxurious stay onboard, reserve the Penthouse Suite, with a roomy 24.2sqm and amazing ocean views, separate sitting or living areas, bathrooms with marble vanities. Orion II will be travelling the Southeast Asia Cruise route from 17 January – 1 February 2013. Preliminary prices start from US\$9,485.

Invitation-Only Destinations

It’s often not about how well the game has been played, but where the game has taken place. Secure bragging rights by playing on the most exclusive golf clubs in the world – a feat that can only be bought by knowing the right persons.

First on the list is the notoriously exclusive men-only golf club, the Augusta National Golf Club. The membership fees are quite low actually, believed to be about US\$10,000 according to some sources however membership is only extended by invitation. If you ever get to play on the course, you’ll be one of the few golfers in this prestigious club that has admitted only select members like Jack Welch, Bill Gates and Warren Buffett. You’ll also be able to play on the hallowed grounds that have seen about eighty professional golfers battling the various obstacles in order to win the coveted green jacket and prize money in the Masters competition each year. Be sure to avail of the highly trained caddies, decked in their distinctive white jumpsuits, so you can achieve your personal best.

Another ultra-private golf course is the Seminole Golf Club in Florida, USA, which is

also by invitation-only and has notably once rejected Jack Nicklaus for membership. Its exclusivity is compounded by the lack of publicity – no PGA tour has been hosted here nor has any celebrity charity event with any television crews been hosted on this site. It has, however, received several presidents, foreign royalty and golfer Ben Hogan. The 100-acre property presents distinctive dunes along the Atlantic Ocean, with massive sand ridges and precisely-placed lakes. The course, designed by Donald Ross in 1930, tests golfers’ handling of the various angles, hazards and most particularly, the wind conditions. Ben Hogan made it a habit to train for the Masters at this course as he believed that if you could play “Seminole, you can play any course in the world”.

Japan’s most exclusive course is the Hirono Golf Course in Kobe, Japan, which allows only members and their guests to enter the club, which has hosted a couple of golfing events – the Japan Amateur and the Japan Open held in the 1930s. The course, built in 1932 by CH Alison, has been carefully manicured and conditioned in order to afford

golfers the best golfing experience possible. Here you’ll have to tackle Alison’s illusions of depth perceptions, with the fifth, 14th and 15th hole the most challenging holes on the course. You’ll need skills like Jack Nicklaus who was the first golfer in 1963 to reach the 15th hole in two strokes. Pack long pants and a smart jacket and prepare for the pièce de résistance – the communal hot bath after the golf game.

Pit your skills against golfing legends as you, too, follow in their footsteps on the most difficult, beautiful and exclusive golf courses in the world.



Legend Golf and Safari Resorts

the Extreme 19th is the highest and longest par-three hole in the world, conceived by Graham Cooke and designed by David Riddle

For the Thrill-Seekers

Hide away from the crowds in the most unexpected golfing destinations in the world, whether it's the highest course in the world, the most isolated course or even possibly in the most prolific war-ravaged location.

Head over to the La Paz Golf Club (www.lapazgolfclub.com) in Bolivia, which is an astounding 10,650 feet above sea levels, with eroded sandstone, snow-capped mountains and condors circling overhead. Once acclimatised to the altitudes, golfers have reported that balls fly straighter and higher than anywhere else, so just for a day, you too, can be like Tiger Woods. This would come in handy as you attempt to navigate the gnarled nooks and twisted crannies of the canyon, while scaling the highest point of the course at an estimated 10,964 feet.

For a truly unique golfing experience, head to South Africa's Legend Golf and Safari Resorts (www.legend-resort.com) to play its signature three-par 19th hole, accessible only via helicopter. The Extreme 19th is the highest and longest par-three hole in the world, conceived by Graham Cooke and designed by David Riddle, costing about US\$657 for one person to tee off. An average tee shot takes nearly 30 seconds to land due to its height, about 430 m above the fairway. Factoring in the wind conditions, you'd need to be able to hit a distance of about 361m and if you happen to hit a hole-in-one, you would not only set a course record, you'd also have the privilege of beating professional golfer Pádraig Harrington and walking away with the prize money of US\$1m for that course. Stay at the 2011 World Travel Awards' winner of Africa's Leading Sports Resort's Resorts Suites (about US\$263 to US\$369 per night, depending on the package you choose), which boasts a clientele that includes Hollywood, sporting and golfing celebrities.



Cessna Citation X

Lovers of Luxury

Add a touch of haute couture to your golfing ensemble by splurging on the most divine accessories, such as the exquisite unisex Louis Vuitton (www.louisvuitton.com) golfing bag, priced at US\$11,700, with a monogram canvas and natural cowhide trim. The bag can hold a full set of clubs with six interior compartments as well as several inside pockets to hold clothes, umbrellas, balls, gloves and towels and any other essentials for that perfect golf game. The leather is protected by large studs below the base of the bag, with a highly resistant base and water-draining eyelet to preserve the bag in the best possible condition.

For optimum performance on the course, purchase the Honma (www.pan-west.com) 5-Star series of golf clubs (about US\$88,091 for a full set of clubs). Choose from three models, that is, the C, S and E Series, for a driver, two fairway woods, nine irons, one putter and an exquisitely designed golf bag. The clubs are designed for a long carry that can be achieved with the greatest ease. The driver's deep centre of gravity and high moment of inertia, allows golfers to effortlessly lift the ball and reduce the orientation variation, distance loss. These clubs will also deliver a wide sweet spot for



Honma 5-Star series golf clubs



Cessna Citation X

powerful trajectory and high repulsion, allowing the ball to fly further with less effort. Should the luxury of time be one luxury you can't quite seem to muster, head to the golf course with the ultimate in transportation, your very own private jet. This will shave off a lot of time from your journey, allowing you the privilege of being able to play at more distant courses. Join the leagues of professional golfers like Davis Love III, who flies on a Cessna Citation X and you'll be able to head to more elusive golf courses that are far from major airports. These include the River Course at Blackwolf Run in Kohler, which is just a 10 minute drive to the first tee from the nearest airport, the Sheboygan County Memorial Airport. You can even consider opting for fractional ownership of a private jet, where US\$400,000 can buy you about 50 hours of flight time with NetJets (www.netjets.com). **INSPIRE**

head to the golf course with the ultimate in transportation, your very own private jet