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# WELCOME

wasn't initially enthralled with this idea. A World Top 100 seemed unavoidably random simply because of its scale - and we do not want our rankings to be random. In fact, quite the

opposite; we want them to be considered, iligent and accurate representations of the finest courses in every region, country, continent or, in this case, planet.

Midway through the process though, I started to love it. Of course I accept it's more random than our other lists - we are ranking the whole world after all, and the margins between the elite courses in the list and those just outside it are tiny. However, it is considered, it is diligent and I sincerely believe it *is* an accurate

There is a good mix of traditional and

representation of the very, very best courses in the world. There are many wonderful courses outside the 100, but every single course in it is exceptional. modern, and a decent geographical split - although it is absolutely the case that certain countries do dominate. It won't shock you that America is one, but is it surprising that the UK and Ireland more than match the US for entries? Could we be biased towards UK&I courses? It's possible, but we definitely weren't. In fact, our overseas panellists thought we should have more UK&I entries. Even without those (and there are two Irish links and a Berkshire heathland I would





State Billion and Billion as a state of the

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love to have in), this list shows how lucky we are to have so many world-class courses within relatively easy reach.

There is one proviso, though: we only considered courses open to the public no matter how much the green fee is and how limited the tee times are – and, as a result of that policy, a raft of epic US courses – as well as Morfontaine, Loch Lomond *et al* – were ineligible. We felt a list with so many 'inaccessible' courses in it lost relevance and value to our readers.

But that's enough backstory. Let us begin our journey through the world's 100 greatest courses you can play...

Chris Bertram, Top 100 Editor







## HOW WE DID IT

or this inaugural World Top 100 we enlisted the expertise of a panel with vast specialist as well as worldwide experience. As we detail below. each member has comprehensive knowledge of specific areas as well as experience of courses across the world and it is that ability to offer a global overview that enabled us to piece together what we think is a list that accurately reflects reality.

So, for example, our Canadian experts didn't only moot the Canadian courses they felt were worthy of inclusion, they were also able to suggest which courses in other countries they were of a similar quality to. Elite courses of UK&I and the USA were often used as a reference point.

The criteria for assessment was the same as in all of our Top 100s - design, setting, playability, memorable holes, consistency and presentation. We did not, however, mark the courses this time as we felt they were so close in quality that the margins in terms of marks would mean so many courses were on the same totals.

Finally, if a panellist had direct or even tenuous links to a course, they were not able to comment on it.



#### CHRIS BERTRAM SCOTLAND Our Top 100 Courses editor, has played

of the UK&I and Continent's finest.



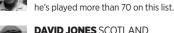
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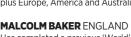
DAVID McLAY-KIDD SCOTLAND Feted architect who knows the best of he UK & America, where he now lives.



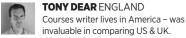
JIMMIE JAMES USA Following Golf.com's 'World Top 100',



DAVID JONES SCOTLAND Blogger who's played widely in the UK plus Europe, America and Australia



Has completed a previous 'World' list and played an amazing 89 on this one.



invaluable in comparing US & UK. SCOTT CHAMPION AUSTRALIA Architect who has played all of Australia's best, and widely in the UK.



OLIVER TUBB SCOTLAND Lobb & Partners architect based in Canada - and with UK expertise, too.



KIRK BAERT CANADA Canadian lawyer who's just played 125+ rounds on the best UK courses.



**CRAIG HALDANE** SOUTH AFRICA Gleneagles greenkeeper from South Africa. Has Asia/Middle East expertise.



**GARETH WILLIAMS** ENGLAND Faldo Design architect has excellent knowledge of the best of Asia

In addition, we referred to but weren't bound by, our existing UK&I & Continental Europe rankings

Over the next 30 pages you will see images that take your breath away, but there is little - if anything - that surpasses this. Just drink in this setting for a moment, and know that this is not some kind of Photoshop wizardry - Royal County Down really is as aesthetically perfect as this. That is the first, very obvious, appeal

ROYAL COUNTY DOWN

**NORTHERN IRELAND** 

--- DOWN,

of our first World Top 100 No.1. The second is more subtle but just as notable; a relentlessly probing challenge of all aspects of the game.

It is indubitably an awesome test, one which in inclement weather could verge toward being too difficult for high handicappers. That is the sum total of any criticism you could level at the course we believe is the finest in the world.

RCD is, by any stretch of the imagination, not especially forgiving. Carries of up to 200 yards are sometimes required and while the fairways are often wide, gorse and rough mean waywardness is punished.

Drive bunkers add to the premium on direction, and their pleasingly unkempt nature - with overhanging lips of marram, fescue and heather - adds additional penalty.

Domed greens dismiss approach shots lacking accuracy and recovery shots around them are perilous, for the slick slopes take mishit chips (and putts) away from the pin and indeed potentially off the green entirely.

Mistakes are punished here... and are compounded if not accepted. Fortune doesn't often favour the brave at RCD.

But while visitors must be prepared for a robust examination of all parts of their game, this Northern Ireland links never feels tricked-up or unfair - unless you dislike blind shots, because there are plenty of them here.

RCD does not need the help of the weather to be testing or to get its full experience. It is epic in any conditions and on a relatively benign evening it is utterly heavenly; still sufficiently challenging, but

also offering the chance to savour (and On the opening trio, Dundrum Bay It is, without fear of contradiction, a

capture for your screensaver and wallpaper) a location and landscape whose majesty is conveyed accurately in the images you see of it here and elsewhere. edges their right side and a better start in Britain and Ireland you will not find. Then you turn round for the seminal short 4th and the rest of the front nine, with the towering Mountains of Mourne a brooding backdrop. Sand dunes, gorse, bracken, heather and those bearded bunkers decorate fingers of gorgeous seaside turf, each individual masterpiece sitting exquisitely in the wider gallery. breathtaking arena and, in our opinion, the finest course in the world you can play.

Also play Royal Portrush to the north and County Louth and Dublin's elite (two hours) to the south. **Closest city** Belfast is less than an hour away.





Set against the spectacular scenes that follow on every page of this Top 100, the Old might look a little sedate and under-powered. It does, however, take the breath away in many other ways. It makes the hairs on the back of your neck stand up on the 1st tee and several times thereafter, especially as you play back into the town on the back nine.

Also play St Andrews New and Castle, Kingsbarns, Dumbarnie and Elie. Closest city Edinburgh is 80 mins away.







Martin Ebert's bold revision of Philip Mackenzie Ross' design has reaped significant rewards. Before Ebert's intervention, the Ailsa would be more like No.54 rather than No.4. But it now makes much more of its peerless setting as well as improving the technical merit of the holes. Full of memorable tests, the stretch around the lighthouse is one of the best in Britain.

Also play Turnberry's Kintyre, Royal Troon, Western Gailes, Prestwick, and Dundonald. Closest city Glasgow is an hour away.



Royal Melbourne is golf on a grand scale. This Alister MacKenzie design incorporates fairways that are wide – although choose your line with care – and the slopes on the greens need to be seen to be believed.

The elevation change is significant as it rises and falls over Melbourne's venerable 'sandbelt' terrain. For a course with such a venerated reputation it is more playable than you might imagine, but to score well you need to have a high level of control over your ball. The 5th is regarded as one of the best par 3s in the world. Its green has deep bunkers left and right and a steep slope at the front. Any putt above the hole should be hit with a dextrous touch. That Royal Melbourne splits GB&I's finest links in our World top five is as good an indication as any as to its quality.

Also play The East, which is also in this World Top 100, plus Victoria, Kingston Heath and Kingswood Peninsula. Get there Melbourne airport is 45 minutes away.





## THE CLASSICS WE COULDN'T INCLUDE...

They're all brilliant, but they won't let you play them

Pine Valley Shinnecock Augusta National Cypress Point NGLA Oakmont Merion Fishers Island Chicago LA North Sand Hills Friar's Head Winged Foot (West) Crystal Downs Riviera CC San Francisco Prairie Dunes Seminole Brookline CC Somerset Hills Shoreacres Garden City Southern Hills California Golf Club Ballyneal Camargo Club Winged Foot (East) Maidstone Oakland Hills (South) Quaker Ridge Sleepy Hollow Olympic Club Inverness Club Yale GC The Golf Club New Albany Muirfield Village Peachtree GC Myopia Hunt Club Ohoopee Match Club (All in the USA) Loch Lomond, Scotland Morfontaine, France Les Bordes, France St George's, Canada Hirono, Japan Ellerston, Australia



Four of our 'global' panellists reveal their ultimate favourites

Which course blew you away visually? Darius Oliver, Australia Cape Wickham - but if not mv own work then Lofoten and Ardfin stand out. I could walk either without playing and still be in awe. Jimmie James, USA Kingsbarns is what Pebble Beach aspires to be. Malcolm Baker, England Tara Iti. Mind-blowing view from the clubhouse. David Jones, Scotland Cape Wickham. Dramatic cliffs, golden beaches and crashing surf. Perfect!

Which was the most fun? DO North Berwick and

St Andrews (Old). Sheep Ranch in Oregon and Carne in Ireland (original 18) are others that you play with a huge grin. JJ The Stadium Course at TPC Sawgrass, despite three scary finishing holes. MB Cape Kidnappers; the sheer drops from the fairway edges is unique. DJ Lahinch. Grinning from ear to ear all the way.

Which course pleasantly surprised you the most?
DO So many, but I adore
West Sussex and Woking.
JJ Swinley Forest spoke to my soul.
MB Morfontaine A little
piece of Surrey in France.
DJ Utrecht de Pan. A
Dutch Swinley and a joy.

One course you'd play for the rest of your life?
DO Only a handful, but I'll go with North Berwick.
I can see myself still loving it when I'm in my 90s.
JJ I never tire of the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island.
MB The Old Course at St Andrews, for its history and playability.
DJ North Berwick- it's such a fun course.



One of the most breathtaking courses ever built. Set along the cliffs of remote King Island, the setting is peerless and the course more than lives up to its canvas. Pretty much every hole is on or very close to the coastline, so you feel the spray on your face. A course designed to please. So many holes are magnificent, including the 18th – which may be the world's most spectacular elimax.

Also play Barnbougle Dunes and Lost Farm. Get there Fly to King Island from Melbourne



#### 5 MUIRFIELD ⋈ EAST LOTHIAN, SCOTLAND

Lacks the scenery of the others in this top 10, but does the pure links experience so well. A routing with few peers, perfect bunkering, immaculate conditioning – and its greatest strength is arguably its consistency. Old Tom and Harry Colt created 18 holes that are all good, if not better than good.

Also play North Berwick, also in this list, Gullane No.1 and No.2, Renaissance, Luffness, Kilspindie. Closest city Edinburgh is 45 minutes away.



## 6 PEBBLE BEACH

Yes, there are many who say the course is not what it was and is in need of restoration. And yes, there are those who insist it has one too many mediocre holes to warrant this position. But its tee-sheet remains full, and many walking off the 18th green will tell you they just had the experience of a lifetime.

Also play Spyglass Hill, also in this list, is along the coast. So, tantalisingly, is Cypress Point. Get there Fly to San Francisco or Los Angeles.



#### **7** ROYAL PORTRUSH (DUNLUCE) **---** ANTRIM, NORTHERN IRELAND

Back on The Open rota and receiving the plaudits it deserves. The Dunluce takes the golfer on a dramatic dunescape journey to the sea and back. Its variety derives from a site that changes from quiet ripples to significant elevation change. New holes by Martin Ebert add even more X Factor.

Also play Portstewart is 10 minutes away, Ballyliffin just over an hour to the north-west. Closest city Belfast is under an hour away.



## 8 PINEHURST (NO.2)

No.2 is a masterclass in course architecture. This US Open venue was designed by Donald Ross and the famous domed greens are still in evidence, providing the greatest obstacle to a good score. Revised by Coore-Crenshaw in 2010, it is wide off the tee but after that you are tested on every shot.

Also play You never need leave Pinehurst, which has nine courses. Kiawah to the south. Get there Raleigh Durham is 60 minutes away.





#### 9 ROYAL DORNOCH (CHAMP'SHIP) HIGHLANDS, SCOTLAND

A links that never seems to stop surprising and enchanting. If you have golf running through your veins, you have to make the journey to this Highland links. Its setting is often overlooked as the domed-green tests and memorable holes set in natural linksland take the focus, but it is an aesthetic delight.

Also play Skibo Castle and Brora nearby plus Nairn and Castle Stuart further south. Closest city Inverness is 60 minutes away.

# DOAK DESIGN **TARA ITI** AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

It feels fair to assume you'll struggle to take your eyes off the image of the first of Tom Doak's New Zealand masterpieces. Laid out on the Te Arai coast, south of Mangawhai, every hole offers a view of the sea. Tara Iti was built on a sandy site and, as you can tantalisingly see, the terrain is covered in fescue grass from tee to green. Doak has sculpted the sand into a kaleidoscope of

mounds, hollows, bowls, ridges and undulations to create holes that engage your mind and delight your eye. There isn't a bunker on the course – just a succession of waste areas. Natural and gorgeous, Tara Iti allows limited access... but you can play it.

Also play Kauri Cliffs, Cape Kidknappers. Get there Auckland is 80 minutes away.



#### **BANDON DUNES** (PACIFIC DUNES) 🐸 OREGON, USA

The highest-ranked of the courses at super resort Bandon in our World ranking. Tom Doak was eager to get the job at Pacific Dunes and boy did he and his Renaissance Golf team make the most of it. Expect one mesmerising hole after another, and a course you would never tire of.

Also play Bandon Dunes, Sheep Ranch, Bandon Trails and Old Macdonald - all on site, incredibly. Get there Southwest Oregon or Portland airport.



#### 12 ROYAL ST GEORGE'S 🕂 KENT, ENGLAND

The top-ranked English course in our list manages to be simultaneously quirky as well as challenging. It is fun and entertaining while still managing to host Open Championships. Characterised by wonderful green complexes, our panel are confident it is England's finest links.

Also play Royal Cinque Ports is in our World list and Open venue Prince's is a GB&I Top 100 entry. Closest city London is two hours by train or car.



#### **13** SUNNINGDALE (OLD) + SURREY, ENGLAND

A Harry Colt masterpiece... you hear those words a lot, but rarely is more apt than here. This is simply heathland heaven. Impossible to believe anyone ever comes to Sunningdale and isn't utterly charmed by this heather and pine utopia. Looks exquisite and a proper but playable test.

Also play The New, Walton Heath (Old), Woking, and St George's Hill are all in this Top 100. Get there London is a 45-minute drive away.



#### **14** KINGSTON HEATH MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Kingston Heath is the archetypal sandbelt course. The turf runs fast, the fairways bleed into scrubby sand rather than rough and the recently renovated bunkering is exquisite. Much is made of the small size (and flatness) of the property, but it gives it a real intimacy. The par 3s are tremendous.

Also play Royal Melbourne West & East, Victoria and Kingswood Peninsula - all are in this list. Get there Melbourne airport is 45 minutes away.



#### **16** ROYAL BIRKDALE **+** LANCASHIRE, ENGLAND

Birkdale is one of the favourite Open venues among tour players, who enjoy the absence of eccentricity in this Southport links. Instead, Birkdale largely plays along fairly flat fairways between dune corridors. The 'English Muirfield' sustains its challenge impressively from the daunting 1st hole.

Also play Formby, which is also in this list, plus Hillside, Southport & Ainsdale, West Lancs. **Closest city** Liverpool is 40 minutes away.





#### **17** NORTH BERWICK 🔀 EAST LOTHIAN, SCOTLAND

Good luck choosing the 'signature' hole at The West Links in North Berwick. Redan, the much-copied par 3, might get the nod from the majority, but that would be to overlook so many vintage alternatives. As memorable as it is entertaining, the closing stretch will have you reminiscing forever.

Also play Muirfield, Gullane 1& 2, Renaissance. Luffness, Archerfield, Kilspindie, Dunbar. **Closest city** Edinburgh is 45 minutes away.

# SCENIC & PLAYABLE BARNBOUGLE DUNES (DUNES) TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA

Also play Lost Farm at Barnbougle Dunes, and hop over to King Island to get to our No.10, Cape Wickham. Get there Fly to Hobart from an Australian airport.

It's impossible to believe you are on a small island off the coast of Australia here because this course oozes a Celtic links feel. The dunes are higher than you would see at most British links and, as a result, getting the right line to holes is key – especially if you use the ground game. Get the line right and you will find the ball accelerates to the green, get it wrong and you will be faced with a challenging pitch up from a long way away. This is even more pronounced on the back nine, where you are often playing from dune to dune. There are several half holes. none better than the sporty par-4 4th. Wonderfully scenic and very playable.





#### **18** CARNOUSTIE (CHAMPIONSHIP) 🔀 ANGUS, SCOTLAND

The legacy of 1999 is now thankfully a distant memory and Carnoustie is now viewed as it should be - an unremittingly demanding test on beautiful linksland. The climax is one of British golf's great experiences, but there are also lighter moments and a score to be made. It's also in phenomenal condition.

Also play Monifieth, Montrose & Panmure nearby, Aberdeen's elite to the north, Fife to the south. Closest city Dundee is a short drive away.



#### $m{22}$ cabot cliffs NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA

Coore-Crenshaw have built this spectacular course into the breathtaking landscape of Cape Breton. The famed design duo created myriad moments that mix intimidation and daring in many holes on the edge of the bluffs. Jaw-dropping scenes, a clever routing and enjoyably remote.

Also play Cabot Links is also in this list, plus Baddeck Forks or La Portage in Novia Scotia. Get there Halifax airport is three hours away.



#### **26** NEW SOUTH WALES **SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA**

'La Perouse' is a dreamy course in Botany Bay in south-east Sydney. It was officially opened in 1928 and designed by Alister MacKenzie. "It's one of the great golf courses I've seen," said Arnold Palmer. Routed among sand hills with holes taking you down towards the Pacific Ocean.

Also play Lakes GC and The Australian are both a short drive away. Get there Sydney airport is 15 minutes away.



#### 25 CRUDEN BAY **ABERDEENSHIRE, SCOTLAND**

Now rightly being talked about alongside North Berwick and Royal Dornoch among Scotland's most characterful links. Packed with intriguing half-par holes set down on terrain full of mounds, dips, rises and falls, Cruden Bay packs in more entertainment in six holes than most courses manage in 18.

Also play Trump Aberdeen and Royal Aberdeen in this list, plus Fraserburgh and Murcar. Closest city Aberdeen is 20 minutes away.



# DUBLIN. IRELAND

A former Walker Cup venue, Portmarnock is Ireland's Muirfield on and off the course. A traditional club and a traditional links that oozes pedigree and demands solid ballstriking. Lacks aesthetic appeal of others in the top 20 and doesn't give lots back to the higher handicapper, but a very classy links.

Also play The Island, Portmarnock Links and Royal Dublin nearby, The European to the south. **Closest city** Dublin is 20 minutes' drive away.

## **20** PORTMARNOCK



#### 23 WOODHALL SPA (HOTCHKIN) + LINCOLNSHIRE.ENGLAND

Tom Doak and his team have renovated this grand old heathland course to wonderful effect. Out have gone hundreds of trees and in have come Insta-worthy vistas. Some bunkers have been filled in, others built. There's more strategy and firmer turf. The Hotchkin now punches its full weight.

Also play Seacroft, a Top 100 England course, as well as the Hotchkin's sister course, the Bracken. Closest city It's remote! But Lincoln is 30 mins.



#### **21** KINGSBARNS **FIFE. SCOTLAND**

The top-ranked modern course from Britain and Ireland, it is a serious achievement for this Fife links to get into the top 25. Kyle Phillips' design is playable, varied and epically scenic. Sea views on every hole and a brilliant routing that skilfully takes you along the coastline and back again.

Also play St Andrews Old and New are 20 minutes away. Dumbarnie & The Castle too. Closest city St Andrews but also Dundee.



#### 24 SUNNINGDALE (NEW) + SURREY.ENGLAND

Even in a World list where there are so many high-calibre candidates, there can never be more than a few places between the New and Old. Some even prefer the New and certainly it offers arguably a more exacting experience - but, really, golf at Sunningdale just makes you glad to be alive.

Also play The Old, plus Walton Heath, St George's Hill and Woking are also in this list. Get there London is 45 mins away, 60 by train.



### 27 BALLYBUNION (OLD) KERRY, IRELAND

The Old course at Ballybunion starts modestly, there is no getting away from that. The first third makes visitors wonder what all the fuss is about and why Tom Watson waxed so lyrical about it. Then it leaves you speechless with such beauty and drama that we have it in our World top 30.

Also play It's in the famed Ring of Kerry, so Tralee. Waterville, Dooks - plus the Cashen, its No.2. Closest city Limerick is 80 minutes away.



#### **28** BARNBOUGLE (LOST FARM) 🛅 TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA

A very different style to sister Dunes course, Lost Farm doesn't play as a 'pure' links; the ground is a little flatter and there isn't the same firm fescue turf. It was designed as an easier test than the Dunes, but it still has a lot of nuance - and the par 3s are a particular strength.

**Also play** The Dunes at Barnbougle Dunes, and hop over to King Island to get to Cape Wickham. **Get there** Flv to Hobart from an Australian airport.



#### 30 KAWANA (FUJI) SHIZUOKA, JAPAN

Opened in 1936 and designed by Harry Colt's associate Charles Alison, it has been described as 'Japan's Pebble Beach'. It sits alongside Kawana Hotel and sister course Oshima. Both courses offer majestic views - including of Mount Fuji. The Fuji course is a mix of tree-lined and cliff-edge holes.

Also play Ogi GC and Kawana CC are short drives away - plus the Oshima option on site. Get there Haneda airport two hrs 30 mins away.



#### **29** SWINLEY FOREST + ASCOT. BERKSHIRE

Swinley might have the best set of short holes in this entire list. Certainly, there won't be any that are definitely better. Harry Colt's "least worst" is the cutest heathland out there; the master used the undulating terrain to produce a course of rare class, tranquility and beauty.

Also play Sunningdale Old/New, Walton Heath, Woking and St George's Hill are all in this list. Closest city London is 50 minutes away.



#### **31** ROYALLYTHAM&STANNES + LANCASHIRE, ENGLAND

As we know, it isn't anything to look at, with red-brick houses surrounding it. That said, the low-lying linksland - no big dunes here - is beautiful in itself. The bunkering is penal and impossible to avoid as the ground escorts your ball inexorably to sand. Peerlessly presented and consistently good.

Also play Southport's Birkdale, Hillside, Formby, S&A and West Lancs are all an hour away. Closest city Blackpool 10 mins, Liverpool 70 mins.





#### **33** TRUMP ABERDEEN MABERDEENSHIRE, SCOTLAND

If dramatic, 'big dune' golf is your thing, you'll love it here - and think it could be even higher than this lofty position. There aren't sand hills of this size in many places in the UK&I and Martin Hawtree used the topography to produce bold holes, awesome views and heart-pounding tee shots.

Also play Cruden Bay and Royal Aberdeen in this list, plus Fraserburgh and Murcar. Closest city Aberdeen is 20 minutes away



#### 34 ROYAL TROON (CHAMPIONSHIP) X AYRSHIRE, SCOTLAND

Troon is often characterised as a dour but solid links. Yes, there are holes of that nature here, and good ones at that, but Troon is also frequently more scenic - especially on the opening stretch along the coast - and entertaining than it is given credit for. Plus it has the Postage Stamp ...

**Also play** Turnberry Ailsa to the south. Prestwick. Western Gailes and Dundonald nearby. Closest city Glasgow is 50 minutes away.



#### 35 WALTON HEATH (OLD) + SURREY, ENGLAND

Herbert Fowler was a master at working heathland and this 1904 example is one of his best. The last great venue for a Ryder Cup in Europe, the Old has possibly Surrey's thickest blanket of heather and a good score is earned here - all the while enjoying views across the open heathland.

Also play Sunningdale Old/New, Walton Heath. Woking and St George's Hill are all in this list. Closest city London is 22 miles to the north.



**36** ARDFIN 🔀 JURA, SCOTLAND

A spectacular position for a spectacular new course. Bob Harrison has laid down an epic course on the clifftops and shore of this tiny Scottish island. It was a feat of routing, imagination and engineering to get it to work but the results are breathtaking. In a breeze, exacting. But it's bucket list stuff.

Also play The Machrie on neighbouring Islav is also in this list, and Machrihanish en route too. Get there Fly/sail to Islay, then a ferry to Jura.



#### **37** SKIBO CASTLE MIGHLANDS, SCOTLAND

There are only limited tee times, and it is expensive, but you can play here. It is worth the effort and expense. Revamped a decade after opening to take better advantage of its exquisite Loch Evelix and mountain setting. Skibo mixes challenge and scenery as few can - and it's immaculately presented.

Also play Royal Dornoch is almost walkable, plus Brora is a must. Tain and Golspie are also terrific. Closest city Inverness is 60 minutes away.



# BANDON DUNES (BANDON DUNES) OREGON, USA

Bandon Dunes was the first course to open at the eponymous resort, which may very well be the best in the world. There are three other courses in this list and another that was 'Course 101'. The original was designed by Scot David McLay-Kidd, who persuaded Mike Keiser - in his first venture in golf resorts - to give a rookie architect a chance. The original is still the favourite of many

Bandon regulars, who enjoy a thrilling journey that takes them out to the ocean at the 4th hole, and makes return visits at the 6th, 12th, 15th and the sensational 16th, which might just be the most memorable hole you ever play.

Also play Pacific Dunes, Sheep Ranch, Bandon Trails & Old Macdonald all on site. Get there Southwest Oregon or Portland.



#### **38** WATERVILLE KERRY, IRELAND

Waterville has a romantic history and an outstanding setting, but the course itself is its biggest star. Perched on the last bit of south-west Ireland on the edge of Ballinskelligs Bay, this is a links that leaves nothing in the tank. The dunes are big and so is the drama - not least the climax.

Also play Ballybunion's Old and Cashen. Tralee. Dooks and Doonbeg/Lahinch to the north. Closest city Cork and Limerick, two hours away.



## Looking Forward to Welcoming You Back to our Links in 2021

# CASA DE CAMPO (TEETH OF THE DOG) **DOMINICAN** REPUBLIC

Opened in 1971, "The Dog" held a special place in designer Pete Dye's heart. He considered it his finest work, saying: "I created 11 holes and God created seven." The seven the iconic architect refers to are those that lie along the coast and the ocean. Others wind through forest. A visual feast and Dye-level drama. Also play Dye Fore and The Links courses are also on site and superb, too.

Get there Las Americas airport is 75 minutes away.



#### **39** BANDON DUNES (SHEEP RANCH) 📒 OREGON, USA

Added to this mind-blowing resort on the Oregon coast in 2020 but considered by many to be the top course on the property. Sheep Ranch is more exposed to the northerly winds than its siblings, its clifftop greens give it an edge-of-the-world feel that raises the exhilaration factor.

Also play Pacific Dunes, Bandon Dunes, Bandon Trails and Old Macdonald are all also on site. Get there Southwest Oregon airport or Portland.



#### **41** ROYAL LIVERPOOL 🖶 WIRRAL, ENGLAND

Hoylake is really gaining traction these days, where once it was maligned as a little austere and low key. It is nuanced, subtle and interesting. A well bunkered links with excellent green complexes, the new Martin Ebert par 3 is a hit. Is also quietly one of the best-conditioned courses in the UK.

Also play Wallasev is on the Wirral too, plus you have all the Southport links just 45 minutes away. **Closest city** Liverpool is 30 minutes away.



#### 42 ALWOODLEY H WEST YORKSHIRE, ENGLAND

A classy heathland laid out in an out-andback routing, where the inward half tests all who play in the championships held there. Notable investment has promoted its Alister MacKenzie heritage. Expect riskreward holes on springy turf that cut through heather, pines, gorse and bunkers.

Also play Moortown, another classic Alister MacKenzie heathland, is literally across the A61. **Closest city** It is 15 minutes from Leeds centre.

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#### 44 WHISTLING STRAITS (STRAITS) STRAITS (STRAITS)

The purist might take issue with those that claim this is a genuine links, and they'd have some justification. It's anything but natural, and it does look a little too green perhaps. However you classify it though, the fescue fairways (Providence Bent is used for the greens), pot bunkers, and Lake Michigan breezes make it very entertaining.

**Also play** Sand Valley, Erin Hills, Lawsonia Links. **Get there** Chicago (O'Hare) is two hours away.



#### 45 CABOT LINKS NOVASCOTIA, CANADA

Opened in 2011, Cabot Links was designed by Rod Whitman, the right-hand man of Bill Coore, of Coore-Crenshaw – the design firm who designed Cabot Cliffs. It has the characteristics of a firm and fast links and every hole has a view of the ocean. Five holes are played directly across or along the beach.

Also play Cabot Cliffs, which graces this list, plus Baddeck Forks and Le Portage, an hour away. Get there Halifax International, three hours away.



47 BETHPAGE (BLACK)

Rees Jones may have renovated them a

couple of times, but essentially you are

Burbank?). And they ain't easy. This is

Also play So many courses in New York -

Get there New York JFK is 40 minutes away.

including some all-world private ones.

muscular golf; as the infamous sign says,

the Black is an 'extremely difficult course'.

playing the holes AW Tillinghast laid out

(or was it the park's superintendent Joseph

📒 NEW YORK, USA

#### 46 GANTON + scarborough, england

A very hard course to classify, but a very easy course to enjoy. Ganton sits inland, but plays like a links – glacier movement is the reason this sandy site is now 10 miles from the coast. The Ryder, Walker and Curtis Cup host is a classy but exacting test with some of England's finest bunkering.

Also play A little out on its own but Alwoodley and Moortown are just over an hour away in Leeds. Closest city York is 40 minutes away.



Takes it name from the scenic headland named after an attempt by local Maori to kidnap one of Captain Cook's crew. Tom Doak laid down a course on its fingers of land in 2004, using the ridgeand-valley landscape to predictably impressive effect. Yet even his design nous may be surpassed by the views from the cliffs. Fairways are perched on the edge of drops 140m above sea level. It looks unplayable from this image but in reality, although every hole has a view of Hawke's Bay, some play conservatively alongside deep ravines. Yet, as Doak says, "Three times you have to make a perilous leap from the end of one ridge to the end of the next."





#### **48** ST GEORGE'S HILL **WEYBRIDGE, ENGLAND**

Now gaining the reputation it deserves after too many years in the shadow of its Surrey neighbours. St George's Hill is a Harry Colt original that flows beautifully over undulating heathland that permits some of the sandbelt's most adventurous holes. It may be Surrey's most entertaining round.

Also play Sunningdale Old/New, Walton Heath Old/New, three Ws, Swinley Forest, The Berkshire. Closest city London is 30 miles away.



#### 49 GLENEAGLES (KING'S) PERTHSHIRE, SCOTLAND

People often get the King's wrong these days; just because it cannot host the Tour now does not make it a pushover. For us, James Braid's work remains a very, very solid all-round test. He used the tumbling land brilliantly and the King's is packed with 10/10 holes. Oh, and gorgeous scenery.

Also play The Queen's and PGA Centenary on site as well as Blairgowrie's two courses nearby. **Closest cities** Perth is 15 minutes, Edinburgh 50.



#### 50 KIAWAH ISLAND (OCEAN) SOUTH CAROLINA, USA

One of Pete Dye's biggest successes. He and wife Alice routed 10 holes hugging the Atlantic and the other eight running parallel to them. It was Alice who suggested raising the fairways to give unobstructed views of the ocean. This Ryder Cup venue is a breathtaking but breezy challenge.

Also play There are a handful of other courses on site and Pinehurst also in North Carolina. Get there Charleston airport 45 minutes away.

Also play Kauri Cliffs is further north in the North Island, Paraparaumu Beach GC is to the south. Getting there Sits between Auckland and Wellington.





#### 51 ST ENODOC (CHURCH) + CORNWALL, ENGLAND

Magnificent first hole sets the tone for the Church, and the tempo is maintained for almost all of the round. There is a quiet corner on the back nine but that just lets you grab your breath, ready for the rollercoaster finish. Some of England's most memorable holes and a super setting, too.

Also play Perranporth, Royal North Devon, Saunton East and West are all on that coastline. Closest city Plymouth, a 90-minute drive away.



We rate this the No.1 course in the phenomenal resort of Streamsong. Coore-Crenshaw offer generally wide fairways and strategic bunkering. Constantly engaging with numerous great holes.

Also play You have two more courses in this list Black and Blue – plus Florida's many others. Get there Fly to either Tampa or Orlando.





#### 52 LAHINCH (OLD) **CLARE, IRELAND**

This double-page spread is blessed with three of the most interesting, atmospheric and eccentric courses in the world. This one is Ireland's, where the blind par-3 'Dell' and par-5 'Klondvke' are the highlights of a links full of holes that live with you forever. Super views too, but mainly epic holes.

**Also play** Doonbeg is half an hour to the south and Ryder Cup host Adare Manor nearby too. **Closest city** Shannon is a 50-minute drive.



#### **53** UTRECHT DE PAN **UTRECHT, NETHERLANDS**

Harry Colt didn't just weave his magic in Britain and Ireland - he is revered for his work in the Netherlands, too. Here, he laid out a heathland as good as almost anything in Surrey. An exquisite and forgiving experience among the pines and heather. Nice recent revisions by Frank Pont.

Also play Royal Haque, Kennemer, Noordwijkse, Hilversumsche and Rosendaelsche. Get there Amsterdam airport is 90 minutes away.



#### **54** PRESTWICK X AYRSHIRE, SCOTLAND

Quirky holes, a lovely setting and more history than anywhere else... what more do you want? Prestwick ought to be revered more than it is, and is an essential visit for all discerning golfers. Fun from the moment you pull a 7-iron out for your opening blow of the round... and, no, the 1st isn't a par 3.

Also play Turnberry Ailsa to the south and Troon is also in this list. Western Gailes just outside it. Get there Glasgow is around an hour away.



#### **55** ROYAL CINQUE PORTS 🕂 KENT, ENGLAND

Overshadowed by neighbouring Sandwich and has been under-appreciated as a result, but a course at No.55 in the world clearly has enormous appeal. Fabulous undulating, fast-running terrain and cool green locations combine to produce a wealth of memorable holes at 'Deal'. Effortlessly excellent.

Also play Fellow Open hosts Roval St George's and Prince's are virtually walkable from Deal. Closest city London is two hours away.



#### **56** CASTLE STUART MIGHLANDS, SCOTLAND

Gil Hanse's work in this exquisite setting quickly gained admirers and it has proved to be an enduring success. The Scottish Open host is famously playable off the tee but more exacting closer to the green. Stirring views, especially from its higher fairways, and bags of strategy to chew on.

Also play Nairn is within 30 minutes and then head northward to Dornoch, Skibo et al. **Closest city** Inverness is 20 minutes away.



**58** RYE + SUSSEX, ENGLAND

Harry Colt features strongly in our World Top 100 and while his use of the dune ridges here is perhaps not his most famous work, we would politely suggest that it is some of his best. Rye oozes charisma and its collection of par 3s is fabulous. The twoshotters are not far behind the short holes.

Also play West Sussex is also in this list, but you can also hop over the border to Kent's links. **Closest city** London is two hours away.



#### **61** ROYAL WEST NORFOLK + NORFOLK, ENGLAND

Founded in 1892, this two-ball course was designed by Holcombe Ingleby on the north Norfolk coast and has remained much the same ever since. Short, funky and memorable. Brancaster is the ultimate antidote to tedious modern golf. Entertaining, eccentric and so very loveable.

Also play Hunstanton, five minutes away, as well as Sheringham, Royal Cromer and King's Lynn. Closest city Norwich is 70 minutes away.



#### 57 PASATIFMPO E CALIFORNIA.USA

A grand old course with the elegant touch of Alister MacKenzie. Opened in 1929 and located in Santa Cruz, California, Pasatiempo is an undulating and challenging course whose green complexes and artistic bunkers illustrate why the Doctor is revered as a master of his art.

**Also play** Under an hour's drive from Spyglass Hill and Pebble Beach, also in this list. **Closest city** San Francisco airport an hour away.



### **59** MACHRIHANISH 🔀 ARGYLL, SCOTLAND

Some would have Machrihanish 20 places higher and it certainly would not look out of place in that company. The legendary opening tee shot gets things off to a thrilling start and the front nine is packed with memorable, unique holes. The finish is sedate, and in this company, costs it a little.

Also play Machrihanish Dunes, Dunaverty and The Machrie, plus Ardfin on Jura. Closest city Glasgow is two hours away.



#### 62 BANDON DUNES (TRAILS) 💶 OREGON, USA

It may not have the ocean views and sea breezes of its siblings (that said, the view from the 14th tee is overwhelming), but Bandon Trails has a rugged beauty of its own. The classic design and gorgeous. sandy turf is the same as you find elsewhere at Bandon Dunes, however.

Also play Pacific Dunes, Sheep Ranch, Bandon Dunes and Old Macdonald are all also on site. Get there Southwest Oregon or Portland airport.



#### 63 WOKING + SURREY, ENGLAND

"Woking is charming, beautiful and one of the handful of courses golfers could play the rest of their days and never tire of," says Tour player-turned-architect Mike Clayton. We agree. Some of the best green complexes in this list, lots of strategic holes and the delights of purple heather and white sand.

Also play Sunningdale Old/New, Walton Heath, Swinley Forest and St George's Hill, all in this list. **Closest city** London is 50 minutes away.



#### 65 ROYAL MELBOURNE (EAST) MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Former pro Alex Russell and greenkeeper Mick Morcom built the East after helping Alister MacKenzie create the West. The East is slightly shorter than the West with smaller greens, but it retains the heathland characteristics of its famed sister. The opening and closing stretches are immense.

Also play The West, in this 100, plus Victoria, Kingston Heath and Kingswood Peninsula. **Get there** Melbourne Airport is 45 minutes away.



#### **66** PARAPARAUMU BEACH PARAPARAUMU, NEW ZEALAND

"When we all turn to dust, Paraparaumu should still be lying there as it was when the first golfers came by." These are the words of five-time Open champion Peter Thomson and they sum up the allure of this links of firm greens and sand dunes. Designed in 1948 by Alex Russell, a MacKenzie disciple.

Also play Cape Kidnappers and Kauri Cliffs, along with Arrowtown. Get there Wellington is 100 minutes away.



#### 67 ROYAL ABERDEEN 🔀 ABERDEEN, SCOTLAND

This Walker Cup and European Tour host oozes class. It is true that the front nine is the star of the show, but that is only relative - it would be the star in pretty much any links in the UK. The back nine is still of a high calibre and some panellists feel No.67 is the least Balgownie deserves. Pure class.

Also play Cruden Bay and Trump Aberdeen in this list, plus Fraserburgh, Murcar and Newburgh. **Closest city** Aberdeen is 20 minutes away.



#### 68 SAWGRASS (STADIUM) 💶 FLORIDA, USA

Pete and Alice Dye's most famous creation. The husband and wife team carved TPC Sawgrass out of what previously looked like useless swamp to create one of the world's great courses. Home of The Players and to one of the most famous holes on the planet. In its own way, a bucket list experience.

**Also play** It's in the middle of St Augustine's strip of courses, and Streamsong is three hours away. **Closest city** Jacksonville ideally or Orlando.



"You're either playing toward the ocean, along the ocean or away from the ocean" - that's how Davis Love describes his design in Mexico. The American has compared Diamante to a British links with the dunes and firm ground. The Pacific and natural desert is certainly a delightful setting.

Also play El Cardonal by Tiger Woods is also on site and a contender for this list. Get there Cabo San Lucas is 25 minutes away.





#### 69 ROYAL ADELAIDE MOELAIDE, AUSTRALIA

The club as we know it was formed in 1892 with a course at North Park Lands, but finally settled at Seaton in 1906, where Alister MacKenzie laid out the current course. Highlights are the sporty par-4 3rd and 11th, where you drive into fairway lined by sandy waste areas, then to a green within a bowl.

Also play Westward Ho and Mount Osmond are also within striking distance of the city. Get there Adelaide airport is 10 minutes away.



#### **70** STREAMSONG (BLACK) 📒 FLORIDA, USA

Opened in 2017, massive, undulating greens are the most noteworthy characteristic of Gil Hanse's eye-popping design. They may be fairly easy to find, but getting down in two every time will be a serious challenge. Huge sandy waste areas add to the Black's very distinctive look.

**Also play** The Red and Blue are also in this ranking so there is really no reason to leave. Get there Jacksonville or Orlando.



#### **71** JASPER PARK LODGE 📕 JASPER, CANADA

Stanley Thompson is Canada's great architect and this is one of his finest. It opened in 1925 as a nine-holer, but a second nine was added soon after. Elevated tees make the most of the fabulous Rocky Mountains setting, and watching your ball set off towards the peaks is a common thrill.

**Also play** Banff Springs is also in this Top 100, and Black Hawk and Calgary are also worth playing. Get there Jasper Airport is 15 minutes away.



Located in Nekoosa, Wisconsin, those guarantees-of-success Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw designed this dramatic course in 2017. Expect characteristically sweeping, wide fairways and cool green complexes. The course that gives every golfer the chance to choose their own route, get creative, and make full use of their imagination is the course that holds their interest day after day, round after round.

Also play Mammoth Dunes is its sister course and is also in this list (this page!). Plus The Sandbox. Get there South Wood County Airport is 25 mins.



#### **72** VICTORIA MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Part of the sandbelt courses, having moved from Fisherman's Bend in 1926 to the suburb of Cheltenham. "The course now has a remarkable set of greens with pure surfaces. The international top 100 ranking is absolutely earnt," says Geoff Ogilvy, who rates Victoria so much he is a member.

Also play Royal Melbourne West/East, in this 100. plus Kingston Heath and Kingswood Peninsula. Get there Melbourne aiport 90 minutes away.



#### **73** SAND VALLEY (MAMMOTH DUNES) ≡ WISCONSIN, USA

Wide fairways mean everyone gets off the tee safely. But cleverly-positioned and intriguingly-shaped hazards and other obstacles mean those seeking to match or better par need to bring their best. David McLay-Kidd has created fun for everyone.

Also play Sand Valley is its sister course and is also in this list (this page!). Plus The Sandbox. Get there South Wood County Airport 25 mins.



#### **74** ROYAL HAGUE THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS

Harry Colt's second Dutch entry, although in truth it was his associates John Morrison and principally Charles Alison who did the work here. It sits by the seaside but as it tumbles over land with movement in it, it is different in character to our links. A fine revision by Frank Pont helps it into this list.

Also play The Kennemer and Noordwijkse are on the same coast - plus Utrecht, inland. Get there Amsterdam airport 40 minutes away.



#### **75** WEST SUSSEX + SUSSEX, ENGLAND

Set apart from the heathland jewels of Surrey and Berkshire, but 'Pulborough' is in the same class. After a relatively slow start, the front nine is decorated with fine 3s and strategic two-shotters. Pine, birch, heather and sand add up to notable obstacles - but West Sussex is more pleasure than pain.

Also play Rye is also in this list and is a seminal links. Royal Ashdown Forest has two fine courses. **Closest cities** Between Brighton and Portsmouth.



#### **77** GAMBLE SANDS 🐸 WASHINGTON, USA

High on a hillside overlooking the Columbia River in central Washington sits this fabulous David McLay-Kidd design that opened in 2014. It crosses a sandy seam with so many cool, natural features they make every hole a delightful challenge. As playable as it is scenic - and aptly named.

Also play Alta Lake Golf Resort and Bear Mountain Ranch are both worth your time. Get there Spokane airport is two hours away.





#### **78** BANFF SPRINGS MALBERTA, CANADA

Located in an area of world-famous beauty, the original nine-holer by Bill Thomson, an apprentice of Old Tom Morris, was expanded in 1924 by Donald Ross but is credited to Stanley Thompson for his revision. The par-3 4th, the Devil's Cauldron (pictured) sums up the scenes.

Also play Jasper Park Lodge is also in this list and Black Hawk GC is a very worthwhile addition. Get there Calgary airport is 90 minutes away.



#### **79** ERIN HILLS 🐸 WISCONSIN, USA

The visiting golfer from the UK will gaze astonished at the sheer immensity of barren, windswept Erin Hills which throws up numerous inviting shots over its 652 acres. Brooks Koepka made it look fairly limp in shooting -16 at the US Open but, be assured, for you and I it is anything but.

Also play Fellow Top 100 entrant Whistling Straits is 80 minutes away on the edge of Lake Michigan. Closest city Chicago O'Hare is 1hr 50 minutes.



#### 80 FORMBY + LIVERPOOL, LANCASHIRE

Well known for its mix of classic linksland and a mid-round woodland phase, Formby is a worthy entry in this list. The Amateur Championship and Curtis Cup host offers terrific seaside turf, just enough movement in the land to provide varied golf and a fine set of green complexes.

**Also play** Royal Birkdale is also in this list, plus Hillside, Southport & Ainsdale and West Lancs. Closest city Liverpool is 40 minutes away.



#### 82 STREAMSONG (BLUE) 📒 FLORIDA, USA

The Blue course at the Streamsong Resort opened in 2012, the work of Tom Doak. It provides an enjoyable walking experience (unlike most in America) and has distinctively big greens, large sand dunes and undulating contours to provide a tough test as well as enjoyment.

Also play The Resort's Red and Black are also in this ranking, so there is really no reason to leave. Get there Go via Jacksonville or Orlando.



#### 83 HIGHLAND LINKS MOVA SCOTIA, CANADA

In 1939, Cape Breton hired legendary designer Stanley Thompson to work his magic. Highland Links was born, opened in 1941 and described by Thompson as the 'mountains and the ocean' course. Its British feel extends to its hole names, including Killiecrankie and Canny Slap.

Also play Cabot Links and Cabot Cliffs in Inverness are two hours away. Get there JA Douglas McCurdy Sydney Airport.



#### **81** SOUTH CAPE **SYEONGSANG, SOUTH KOREA**

South Gyeongsang location guarantees an awesome experience as you look from its coastal fairways to a combination of blue ocean and green islands. Kyle Phillips' design from 2013 takes in rocky cliffs, jungle-style trees and steep drops. The 14th has echoes of the 7th at Pebble Beach.

Also play Nine Bridges, Jack Nicklaus Korea and Anyang Country Club. Get there Sacheon airport in two hours 45 mins.



#### 84 ROYAL PORTHCAWL 🏙 SWANSEA, WALES

A host of the Walker Cup, Senior Open and European Tour, Porthcawl starts in more explosive fashion than almost any course in the UK. The opening trio along the shore are backed up thereafter, with every hole having a view of the sea. Martin Ebert's renaturalisation of fairway bunkers is a hit.

Also play Pennard, Pyle & Kenfig, Southerndown and Tenby along the south coast of Wales. Closest cities Midway between Swansea & Cardiff.



## 85 LAWSONIA (LINKS) 🐸 WISCONSIN, USA

The Links course at Lawsonia in Green Lake, Wisconsin, is one of America's most historic courses. It was opened in 1930 and designed by Bill Langford and Ted Moreau during the Great Depression era when the future of golf courses was uncertain.

Also play Sister course Woodlands is also excellent, plus Tuscumbia GC, Mascoutin and Whistling Straits, which is also in this list. Get there Dane County Regional Airport.



#### **86** YASLINKS ⊑ ABU DHABI, UAE

This Kyle Phillips design takes advantage of its Gulf-side location on Yas Island. The grass is not the fine fescue of a UK links, but it is closely-cropped, sandy and covers undulating fairways and cool green complexes. Has the wow factor in its setting and lots of memorable holes.

Also play European Tour venue Abu Dhabi GC and Gary Player design Saadiyat Beach. Get there Abu Dhabi airport is 15 minutes away.



#### 87 SPYGLASS HILL 블 CALIFORNIA, USA

Robert Trent Jones Sr had the pleasure of laying out a course among sweeping dunes and outstanding natural beauty, built around the imposing Del Monte Forest. He was helped by son Robert Trent Jones Junior, himself now a famous architect, and the course opened in 1966.

Also play Pebble Beach is another world-class course and is literally just down the road. Get there Monterey Regional Airport is closest

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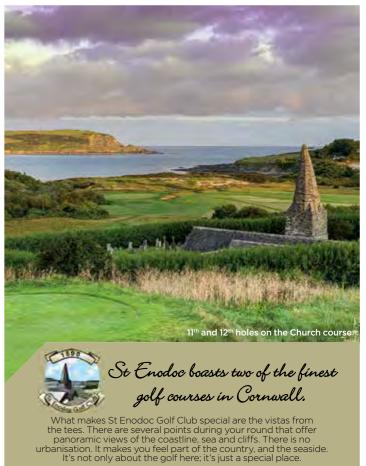
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#### **88** FOREST DUNES (THE LOOP) 📒 MICHIGAN, USA

US publications tend to treat each course on this reversible 18 separately, but we wanted to celebrate Tom Doak's brilliant concept, routing, and shaping by combining them. The sum of these parts is a truly remarkable achievement. Black tends to be rated over Red, but there's precious little between them.

**Also play** The Tom Weiskopf at Forest Dunes is now public. Also Redwood and Ye Olde CC. Get there Roscommon County Airport, 40 mins.



#### **91** FONTAINEBLEAU PARIS, FRANCE

A majestic heathland course to the southeast of Paris. Tom Simpson has worked the land brilliantly to create an entertaining and challenging experience among the pines, heather and rocky outcrops. With some tree management it could be much higher but as it is, a class act. It is France's sole entry.

Also play Fellow classics Chantilly and Saint Germain, plus Ryder Cup host Le Golf National. Get there Paris Charles de Gaulle 45 mins away



#### 89 SILLOTH ON SOLWAY + CUMBRIA, ENGLAND

Some may be surprised at this position, but those raising eyebrows will not have been here. This Cumbrian links is world class and frankly this is the least it deserves. Silloth rewards the determined traveller for its terrific routing between dunes and its equally estimable green complexes. Class.

Also play Seascale, an English Top 100 entry, and Windermere are the top courses nearby. Closest city Carlisle is 80 minutes away.



#### 92 CHAMBERS BAY **WASHINGTON, USA**

Beautifully situated on Puget Sound, this is a much better course than the one we saw in the 2015 US Open, when burnt fairways and disfigured putting surfaces were the story. The fescue on the greens has since been replaced with poa annua and the course plays infinitely better as a result.

Also play Bandon Dunes is six hours away - you can't get that close and not visit. Get there Forty miles south of Seattle.



#### 90 FANCOURT (LINKS) 🗺 GEORGE, SOUTH AFRICA

The Fancourt estate in George has Gary Player's prints all over it - he designed all 54 holes. Opened in November 2000 and host to the Presidents Cup in 2003, the Black Knight created undulating fairways and dune-style terrain that mimic a Scottish links. The surrounding scenery is gorgeous.

Also play There are three courses on site, so play the highly-rated Montagu and Outeniqua too. Get there George Airport is 10 minutes away.



#### **93** THE MACHRIE ISLAY, SCOTLAND

The Machrie has undergone a quiet revolution in the past decade under astute new owners. DJ Russell has renovated the course to make it more scenic and playable, while retaining a healthy dose of its eccentricities. Some may lament the loss of the original, we celebrate its clever remake.

Also play Ardfin is a 10-minute ferry away, Machrihanish & Mach Dunes on the mainland. **Closest city** Glasgow by plane is the easiest route.



#### 95 TOBACCO ROAD ≡ NORTH CAROLINA, USA

The sight of the 1st hole, funnelling between two grassy, 50ft-tall banks either side of the fairway fills you with anticipation before you even start, and the excitement never really lets up on this North Carolina classic. This is Mike Strantz's masterpiece incredibly fun, memorable golf.

**Also play** Pinehurst is 30 minutes to the south. and that's all you need to know. Get there Via Charlotte, Washington or Atlanta.



#### **96** LOFOTEN LINKS E LOFOTEN, NORWAY

This Top 100 is packed with spellbinding settings, but this might well be the best - it's that good. Sprawling on linksland on the edge of the sea that is actually in the Arctic Circle, it looks sensational but also has enough admirable technical holes to put such a raw course in this elite company.

Also play Miklagard and Oslo GC in Norway's capital en route are the obvious/only options. Closest city Oslo, via flight to Bodo.



#### **97** PENINSULA KINGSWOOD (NORTH COURSE) 🔁 MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Peninsula Kingswood's North has always been on great land at the southern tip of the famous sandbelt and northern boundary of the Mornington Peninsula. Its conditioning is now akin to Augusta and this is now no longer Melbourne's little secret.

Also play Royal Melbourne East and West. Kingston Heath and sister course the South. Get there An hour from Melbourne Airport.



**HOIANA SHORES** 

DA NANG, VIETNAM

Boasting views of the East Sea and Cham Islands, this design by Robert Trent Jones Jr finishes particularly strongly with holes that

travel exhilaratingly along the beach.

Links Vietnam, or slightly further to Ba Na Hills.

Get there Da Nang Airport is 45 minutes away.

hug the coastline. The par-4 16th and par-3 17th

Also play It's a 30-minute trip to play at Montgomerie

#### 98 HUMEWOOD Market PORT ELIZABETH, SOUTH AFRICA

One of the best examples of a links as we would expect to find outside GB&I. Humewood is now presented well and is laid out among dunes on the shores of Algoa Bay. Its undulating, wide fairways are well protected by steep-faced bunkers. Edges into this list ahead of Durban.

Also play East London to the north and especially St Francis Links to the south. Get there Port Elizabeth airport 10 minutes away



#### **99** WESTERN GAILES X AYRSHIRE, SCOTLAND

It would have been so easy to overlook unpretentious Western Gailes from this list. Few would have howled, because its reputation is relatively low profile, but make no mistake, this is a links of the highest class. As technically good as any in this list and a pure links experience to boot.

Also play Royal Troon. Prestwick and Turnberry Ailsa are all in this list. Closest city Glasgow is 45 minutes away.





#### **100** YANGTZE DUNES 📕 SHANGHAI, CHINA

The two original courses at the Lanhai club were designed by Jack Nicklaus and opened in 2011. The Links was renovated by OCCM architects and rebranded as Yangtze Dunes. Geoff Ogilvy led the overhaul and he wanted holes playing through dunes not on top of them. Now a clever, sandy experience.

Also play Sheshan Golf Club or Lake Malaren. which are just over an hour away. Get there Shanghai airport is 80 minutes away.