

GOLF
WORLD

TOP

100

BEST-VALUE
COURSES

CONTINENTAL
EUROPE

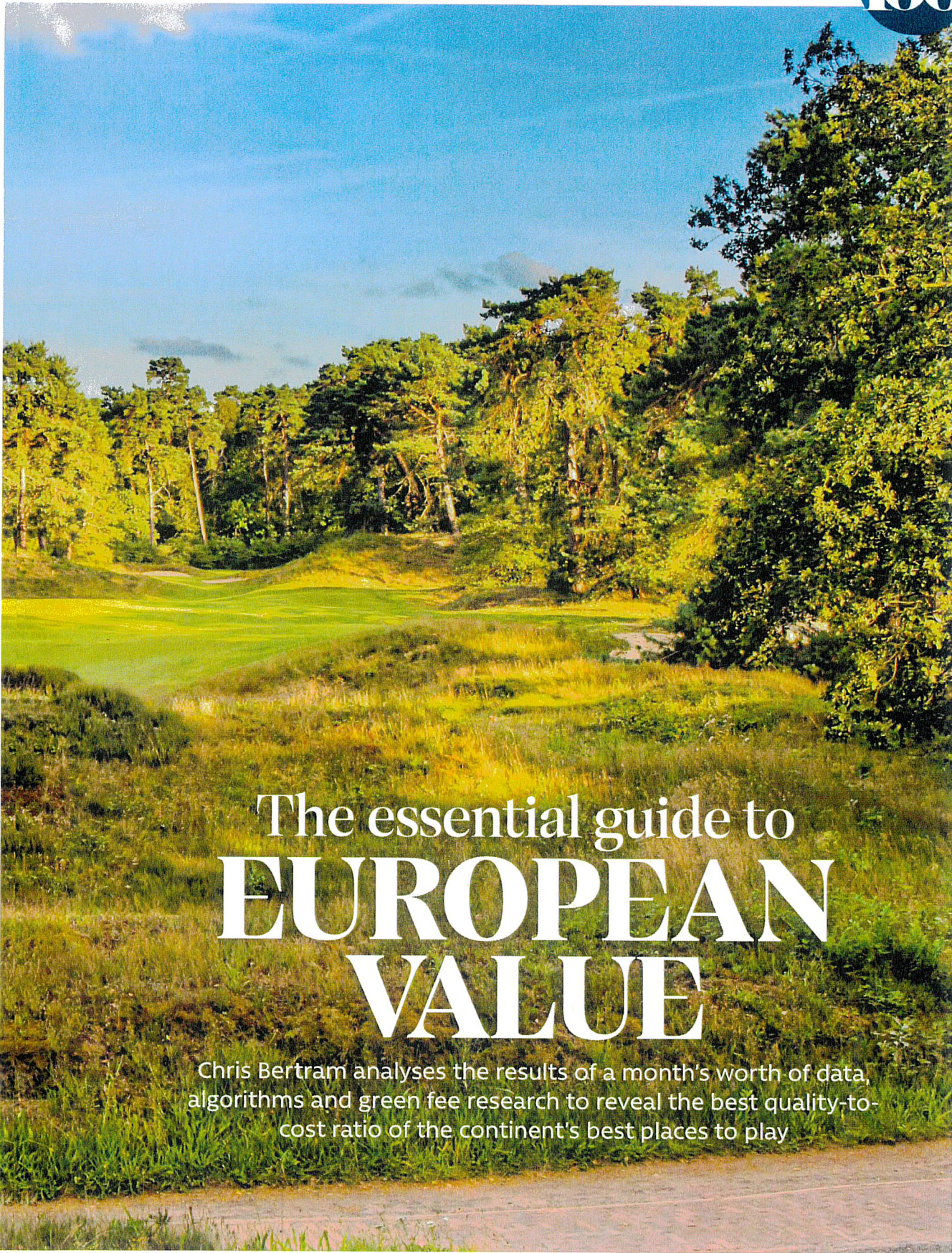
Praia D'El Rey,
Portugal.

THE QUALITY-TO-COST RANKING

*Revealed Europe's Top 100-ranked courses
where you get the most for your money*



Utrecht de Pan, Holland



The essential guide to **EUROPEAN VALUE**

Chris Bertram analyses the results of a month's worth of data, algorithms and green fee research to reveal the best quality-to-cost ratio of the continent's best places to play



The motivation for every Top 100 *TG* produces is to try to help you make informed decisions about where you go on your golf holidays.

The theme of each ranking is naturally a key aspect of how useful that particular one is, and I suspect and hope this month's will sit close to the top of the pile.

There is an enormous amount of data underpinning it, and I'd say even merely the list of green fees at the 100 best courses in Continental Europe you can play is useful in itself. But it is a bit more than just a list of prices, and that's where there is an element of subjectivity.

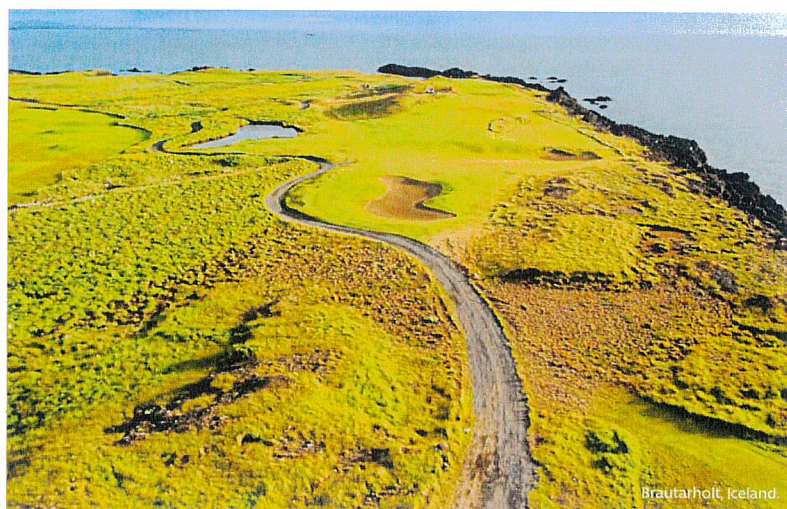
Using each course's position in our main Continental European ranking as

the test of quality against which to calculate the value of their green fee clearly makes a difference to this Top 100. If a course's position in my main Continental Courses Top 100 is 50 places higher or lower than you think it should be, it will be flatteringly or harshly positioned in this "best value" Top 100.

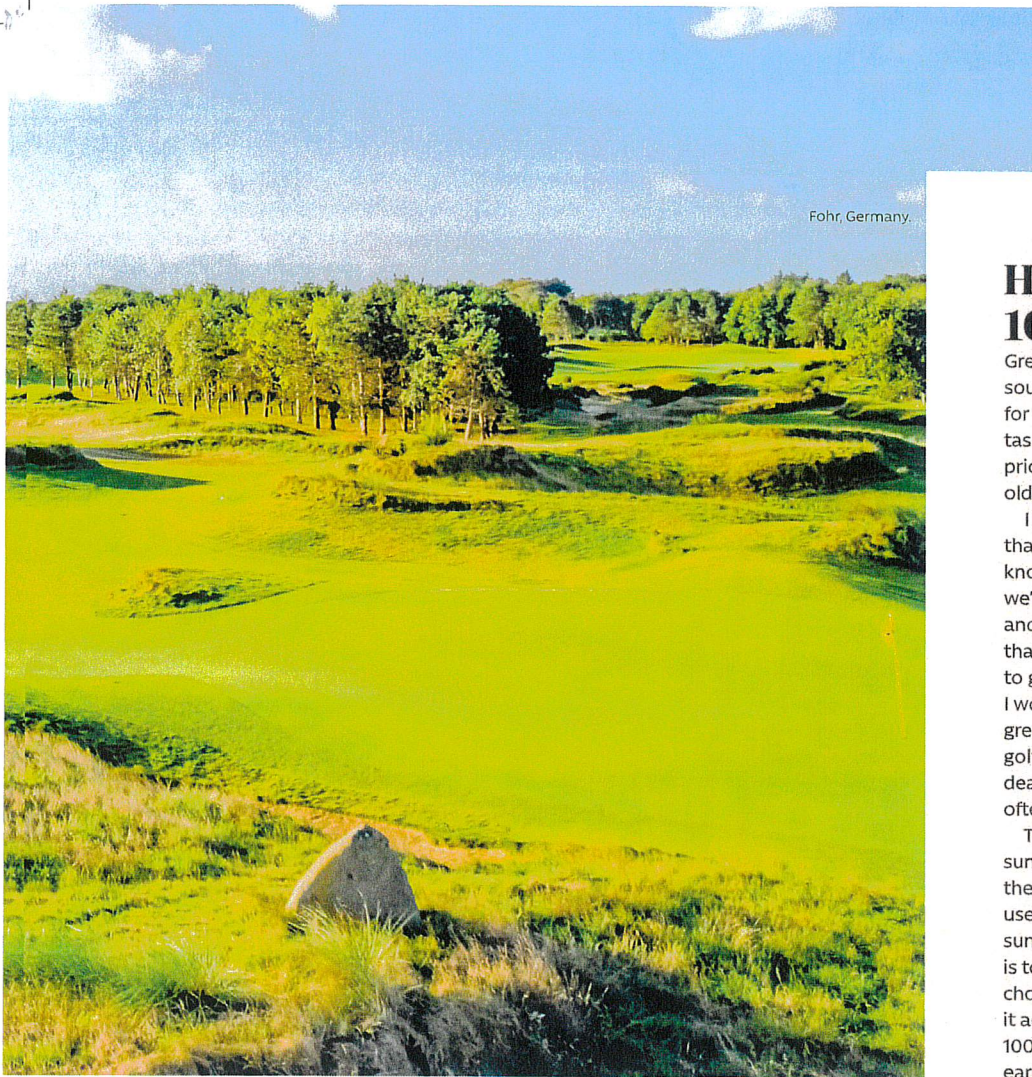
I obviously believe the main Continental Top 100 is robust, though, and I certainly don't feel there are courses in it whose position is so far out as to affect where they find themselves in this list significantly.

I accept that everyone's idea of value varies. Valderrama is €600 and lots of golfers are absolutely delighted to stump up in order to savour one of the world's iconic courses. Some will view it as reassuringly expensive, while others will look at it simply as an iconic course they really want to play.

Many will view it as a price that could never be justified paying. Valderrama's position in this ranking, via the formula I adopted, suggests €600 is a lot. For the majority of golfers, I think it is. But I am also fully aware Valderrama is a premium, world-class product and their



Brautarholt, Iceland.



Fohr, Germany

How this Top 100 was created

Green fees for all 100 courses were sourced, then verified with the clubs for accuracy and context. It's a big task in itself in this era of dynamic pricing and clubs that love to leave old prices on their websites!

I used published green fees rather than what you can get them for. I know some people will say, 'Well, we've played so and so for 10 years and never had to pay that.' I'm sure that will often be the case, but I had to go by the standard fee otherwise I would have been trawling every green fee search engine and all the golf tour operators for the best deals for each course. And likely often fail to find the best one.

The rates chosen are for this summer. That sometimes means the low or medium season rates are used for some courses, because summer is not their key period. That is to their benefit, but I had to choose a period of time and stick to it across the board. I want this Top 100 to inform your summer and early autumn travel, and thus these green fees span July to September. In some instances, I had to select an average of the many dynamic price options a club offers. And in rare instances I have used an average, if a course has a different rate for, say July and August compared to September. That scenario helped a couple of courses into higher places, but never a huge jump that distorts reality.

Once the green fees were sourced, I was then indebted to Excel wizard John Martin for his expertise in coming up with the formula that calculated the value for money (VFM).

The quality of each course (we call it Quality Value) needed to be compared to the respective green fee, so we assigned each one a Price Value. The green fees of the Top 100 courses range from €59 to €600, so these values were used to devise an algorithm to generate a Price Value for each course comparable to the existing Quality Value. A weighting was then applied between Price and Quality to produce an overall VFM mark for each course.

clientele is not especially worried about scrimping and saving.

Those golfers who do not baulk at paying €600 for a round of golf will have no interest in this ranking, and that is absolutely fine. But for the majority, I think this list has much merit.

To be clear, this is about identifying value – not budget courses; €200 is a lot of money and will price some golfers out, but what I believe this list does is identify the courses where paying €200 is most merited.

I look down the top 25 of the list and it 'feels' right to me; that the complex formula used to plot Top 100 positions against a green fee has rewarded high-class courses that have hefty but reasonable green fees, and promoted the courses that appear in the second half of the main Continental ranking that have a seriously appealing price.

The courses that offer the best value are pinpointed at a glance on the final pages of this Top 100 (page 111), but I think what is just as useful is that the list has identified the best pockets of golf at an affordable rate on the continent. I pick out the 10 trips that offer the highest level of quality for your

money on page 106. As a result, I hope this ranking encourages British and Irish golfers to head for slightly less well-trodden paths in the future, given the value available away from some of the most popular destinations is clear. It also shines a light on the fact some of the great names of European golf are accessible to the public and perhaps more affordable than might have been suspected.

The top 10 is thus a pleasing mix of the very best of mainland Europe's courses, as well as some lower-profile venues whose price is frankly hard to believe given their exceptional quality.

So, on one hand you have West Cliffs, Hamburg and Parnu Bay – all top-20 courses in Europe – able to be played for little more than €350. When I look at what some perfectly nice but fairly unremarkable courses in England cost, these three represent incredible value for money.

West Cliffs and its sister course Praia d'El Rey are available for €85 in July and August, then €122 in September (which is more akin to their peak period). That €85 price at least matches Kington, Cleeve Hill, Shiskine and

Appleby – in my opinion the best value golf in GB&I – in terms of quality-to-cost ratio; €170 for a game on both West Cliffs and Praia d'El Rey is money I am confident no one would regret spending.

Elsewhere, in the top 10 you have the two courses in Denmark – as well as Kongsvinger in Norway at No.11 – that offer quality that is rarely available for what is just over £50 in GB&I. Go and play Lubker and Holstebro for a total of €134 and you'll likely struggle to come to terms with the prices charged in Britain from that point onwards.

Fontainebleau (No.9) at €220 is hefty, but this is a World Top 100 course that, by way of a guide, is better in my opinion than, say, Worpleston or West Hill. Moving into the 11-30 section brings more European royalty in the form of Falsterbo, Chantilly and Kennemer. All three are real class and those are fees that are worthy of paying for their pedigree.

The €200 asked to play Terras da Comporta's Dunas (No.13) is no trifling amount, but I'd rather play it than about half of the GB&I Top 100 – and they cost more than it does to tee it up on David McLay Kidd's Lisbon masterpiece.

In this section, there are other standouts that cost around the €100 mark. Sand Valley in Poland for €90; Estela near Porto for €100; Iceland's Brautarholt for €110; Lisbon's Penha Longa for €78; and the Heritage course at Penati in Slovakia for €100 all represent sensational value.

This mix of well-priced pedigree and green fees that are hard to believe continues in the 20 positions below that. Great Northern for €147 adds to the theory that elite Danish golf is well-priced golf. Harry Colt's classy Saint Germain and Bro Hof Slott's X Factor would be more than their €200 tags if they were in GB&I.

PGA Aroeira No.1 for sub-€100 and

Fohr and Limburg for just over the three-figure mark are three more very, very well-priced courses.

Esbjerg (Marbaek) and Modry Las are in the second half of the list, but at €67 and €68 respectively, they are total bargains. They are two of the courses just outside the main Continental Courses list (which came in to replace the private courses that were ineligible) and the algorithm works slightly against them because of that – but the fact they are in the 60s is testament to their value. There simply isn't that sort of quality available for that price very widely in GB&I.

This is a Top 100 that dates quicker than most. But while green fees do change from year to year, I think it's fair to suggest that if a course is in the top 30 now, there is every chance it will offer outstanding value for money next year, even if the exact green fee might be a little out of date. Similarly, those at the bottom of the list are unlikely to suddenly reduce their green fees.

As ever, I'd relish your comments on the list and the method – as well as whether this Top 100 has inspired you to go on a trip that had never previously appealed. I will do this exercise for GB&I next year, so feedback on whether you think I've got the emphasis pitched about right is most welcome.

'Go and play Lubker or Holstebro for a total of €134 and you'll likely struggle to come to terms with the prices charged in Britain'



Kytäjä, Finland.

Europe's best breaks at affordable prices

The top 10 golf trips in mainland Europe that offer the best quality-to-cost ratio – by Chris Bertram, who has done them all

1 DENMARK & GERMAN ISLANDS

A proper adventure, and if it seems like a lot of effort, I did this exact trip in 2023 – minus Fohr. I went to Fohr last year instead, and that only made me realise how it really ought to have been on that 2023 itinerary. So, fly to Copenhagen (Billund also works) and savour Danish quintet Lubker (No.6), Holstebro (No.7), Great Northern (No.36), Esbjerg's Marbaek (No.59) and Silkeborg (No.89). Then hop over to Budersand (No.15) on the island of Sylt by taking the car train from Niebull. Return to the mainland and go to Fohr (No.41) on the eponymous island via a ferry from Dagebull, which is 15 minutes' drive from Niebull. Links, heathland and parkland on one epic trip.

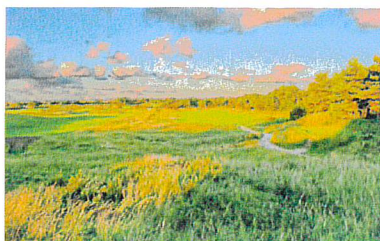
Lubker.

2 NORTH LISBON & CASCAIS

West Cliffs (No.1) and Praia d'El Rey (No.5) would have made the 'Silver Coast' an outstanding No.1 – but the seven-course Danish-German trip just has a bit more depth, even if a bit of extra effort is required. Priced at €85 in July and August, and €122 in September, they are part of the same resort and located close to Obidos, an hour's drive from central Lisbon. Truly sensational value. Royal Obidos (No.58) sits between them so is an obvious third course and I'm adding Penha Longa (No.17) and Oitavos Dunes (No.37) to the mix because Cascais is only an hour down the coast.



Royal Obidos.



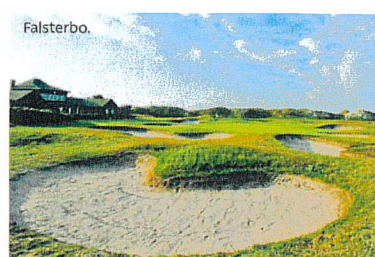
3 THE NETHERLANDS

Astonishing depth and variety. There are six top-50 entries in the list: Utrecht de Pan (No.4), Kennemer (No.16), Rosendaelsche (No.26), Royal Hague (No.28), De Swinkelsche (No.34) and Hilversum (No.49). And you can also add Noordwijkse (No.55, above, which might be slightly misleading as it is the nine-hole rate multiplied by two as they renovate half the course), Bernardus (No.77) and Hoge Kleij (No.78). A bit of travelling around, but it's not onerous and more than rewarded with the quality and its cost.



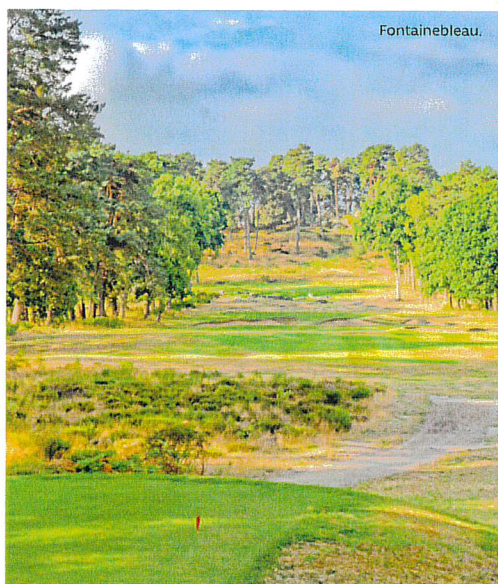
4 BELGIUM & EINDHOVEN

A really pleasant and perhaps surprisingly affordable trip. Belgium isn't noted for value generally, but in Royal Zoute (No.12), Royal Limburg (No.35) Ravenstein (No.61), Royal Antwerp (No.65), Royal Ostend (No.84) and Bois d'Arlon's Heathland (No.85), its golf is very well priced. Then hop over the border for one of the Netherlands' best, Eindhoven (No.22).



5 SOUTHERN SWEDEN & COPENHAGEN

The fabled links of Falsterbo (No.20) is the prime attraction, then add in Kristianstads (No.40), The National's Links (No.52) and Ljunghusens (No.88). All are very, very easy to get to – as are The Scandinavian's duo across the bridge in Denmark. Its New (No.70) and Old (No.75) are part of a premium club, priced at €240 each.



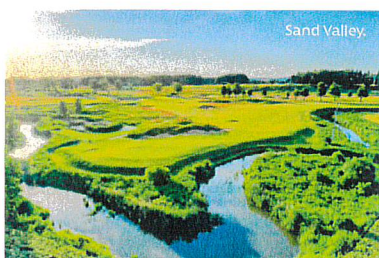
6 PARIS

Even with the two courses at both Morfontaine and Les Bordes left out as they are private clubs, Paris offers a high-class affordable golf trip. The green fee at Fontainebleau (No.9) has nudged up since 2024, but its quality-to-cost ratio is still superb. Chantilly (No.27) on the northern outskirts of the city and Saint Germain (No.38) to the west would normally be complemented by Le Golf National, but it is being renovated and only just poised to reopen.



7 CENTRAL & SOUTH LISBON

Team up the Dunas at Terras da Comporta (No.13), with sister course Torre (No.83) and the No.1 at PGA Aroeira (No.44), which is on the outskirts of Lisbon and is on the 'correct' side of the city for the journey to Terras da Comporta. Troia will also be a part of your itinerary once it reopens after its refurbishment.



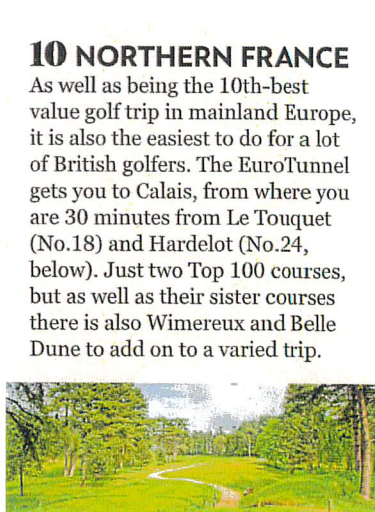
8 POLAND

Just two entries here, but the value is terrific. Sand Valley – a clever heathy course that is the combined design chops of Lassi Pekka Tilander and Tony Ristola – is at No.25 and Gary Player's Modry Las at No.71. Playing both of them will set you back €158. Need I say any more?



9 SOUTH WEST FRANCE

Cabot Bordeaux has two courses in the ranking: Châteaux (No.32) and Vignes (No.94). Forty minutes inland sits Saint Emillionais (No.14) – a Tom Doak design for €120. Further south is the beautiful but unforgiving Seignosse (No.56) and the seaside-woodland of Chiberta (No.62).



10 NORTHERN FRANCE

As well as being the 10th-best value golf trip in mainland Europe, it is also the easiest to do for a lot of British golfers. The EuroTunnel gets you to Calais, from where you are 30 minutes from Le Touquet (No.18) and Hardelot (No.24, below). Just two Top 100 courses, but as well as their sister courses there is also Wimereux and Belle Dune to add on to a varied trip.

Top 100 Best-Value Courses in Continental Europe

We reveal exactly where your money buys the highest-quality golf



Parnu Bay, Estonia

- 1 **West Cliffs**, Portugal
Green fee €104, T100 rank 17, VFM 79.99
- 2 **Hamburger**, Germany
Green fee €140, T100 rank 9, VFM 79.28
- 3 **Parnu Bay**, Estonia
Green fee €120, T100 rank 19, VFM 78.81
- 4 **Utrecht de Pan**, Netherlands
Green fee €235, T100 rank 2, VFM 78.45
- 5 **Praia d'El Rey**, Portugal
Green fee €104, T100 rank 29, VFM 78.17
- 6 **Lubker (Sand & Sky)**, Denmark
Green fee €67, T100 rank 54, VFM 77.83
- 7 **Holstebro (Forest)**, Denmark
Green fee €67, T100 rank 56, VFM 77.69
- 8 **El Saler**, Spain
Green fee €150, T100 rank 18, VFM 77.52
- 9 **Fontainebleau**, France
Green fee €220, T100 rank 3, VFM 77.10
- 10 **Visby**, Sweden
Green fee €151, T100 rank 20, VFM 77.03
- 11 **Kongsvinger**, Norway
Green fee €59, T100 rank 64, VFM 76.98
- 12 **Royal Zoute**, Belgium
Green fee €125, T100 rank 31, VFM 76.95
- 13 **Terras da Comporta (Dunas)**, Portugal
Green fee €200, T100 rank 7, VFM 76.63
- 14 **Saint Emillionais**, France
Green fee €120, T100 rank 38, VFM 76.36
- 15 **Budersand**, Germany
Green fee €130, T100 rank 35, VFM 76.28
- 16 **Kennemer (B&C)**, Netherlands
Green fee €195, T100 rank 12, VFM 76.11
- 17 **Penha Longa (Atlantico)**, Portugal
Green fee €78, T100 rank 63, VFM 76.08
- 18 **Le Touquet (La Mer)**, France
Green fee €155, T100 rank 25, VFM 76.01
- 19 **Estela**, Portugal
Green fee €100, T100 rank 58, VFM 75.89
- 20 **Falsterbo**, Sweden
Green fee €161, T100 rank 24, VFM 75.87
- 21 **Thracian Cliffs**, Bulgaria
Green fee €119, T100 rank 45, VFM 75.78
- 22 **Eindhoven**, Netherlands
Green fee €155, T100 rank 28, VFM 75.66
- 23 **Palmares (Praia/Lagos)**, Portugal
Green fee €120, T100 rank 48, VFM 75.59
- 24 **Hardelot (Les Pins)**, France
Green fee €150, T100 rank 34, VFM 75.49
- 25 **Sand Valley**, Poland
Green fee €90, T100 rank 65, VFM 75.34
- 26 **Rosendaelsche**, Netherlands
Green fee €140, T100 rank 39, VFM 75.22
- 27 **Chantilly (Vineuil)**, France
Green fee €220, T100 rank 11, VFM 75.00
- 28 **Royal Hague**, Netherlands
Green fee €250, T100 rank 4, VFM 74.90
- 29 **Brautarholt**, Iceland
Green fee €110, T100 rank 61, VFM 74.84
- 30 **Monte Rei**, Portugal
Green fee €215, T100 rank 14, VFM 74.83
- 31 **Penati (Heritage)**, Slovakia
Green fee €100, T100 rank 66, VFM 74.77
- 32 **Cabot Bordeaux (Châteaux)**, France
Green fee €195, T100 rank 21, VFM 74.64
- 33 **Sand**, Sweden
Green fee €92, T100 rank 74, VFM 74.41
- 34 **De Swinkelsche**, Netherlands
Green fee €78, T100 rank 82, VFM 74.36
- 35 **Royal Limburg**, Belgium
Green fee €125, T100 rank 60, VFM 74.22
- 36 **Great Northern**, Denmark
Green fee €147, T100 rank 49, VFM 74.20
- 37 **Oitavos Dunes**, Portugal
Green fee €155, T100 rank 42, VFM 74.19
- 38 **Saint Germain**, France
Green fee €200, T100 rank 23, VFM 74.04
- 39 **Bro Hof Slott (Stadium)**, Sweden
Green fee €202, T100 rank 26, VFM 73.52
- 40 **Kristianstads**, Sweden
Green fee €128, T100 rank 67, VFM 73.30
- 41 **Fohr (Red & Blue)**, Germany
Green fee €110, T100 rank 76, VFM 73.22
- 42 **Las Colinas**, Spain
Green fee €100, T100 rank 83, VFM 73.16
- 43 **Verdura (East)**, Italy
Green fee €170, T100 rank 50, VFM 73.02
- 44 **PGA Aroeira (No.1)**, Portugal
Green fee €101, T100 rank 85, VFM 73.01
- 45 **Lofoten Links**, Norway
Green fee €279, T100 rank 5, VFM 72.96
- 46 **Carya**, Turkey
Green fee €185, T100 rank 40, VFM 72.83
- 47 **Son Gual**, Spain
Green fee €135, T100 rank 70, VFM 72.74
- 48 **Camiral (stadium)**, Spain
Green fee €230, T100 rank 22, VFM 72.68
- 49 **Hilversum**, Netherlands
Green fee €200, T100 rank 36, VFM 72.64
- 50 **Villa d'Este**, Italy
Green fee €165, T100 rank 59, VFM 72.36
- 51 **Kytäjä (South East)**, Finland
Green fee €90, T100 rank 90, VFM 72.26
- 52 **The National (Links)**, Sweden
Green fee €119, T100 rank 86, VFM 72.05
- 53 **Les Aisses**, France
Green fee €150, T100 rank 72, VFM 71.78
- 54 **Vilamoura Golf (old)**, Portugal
Green fee €215, T100 rank 37, VFM 71.75



Sand Valley, Poland.

- 55 Noordwijkse, Netherlands
Green fee €240, T100 rank 30, VFM 71.27
- 56 Seignosse, France
Green fee €149, T100 rank 77, VFM 71.13
- 57 Terre Blanche (Chateau), France
Green fee €240, T100 rank 33, VFM 71.06
- 58 Royal Obidos, Portugal
Green fee €100, T100 rank 98, VFM 71.06
- 59 Esbjerg (Marbaek), Denmark
Green fee €67, T100 rank 105, VFM 70.90
- 60 Royal Park (Trent Jones), Italy
Green fee €160, T100 rank 75, VFM 70.86
- 61 Ravenstein (Old), Belgium
Green fee €150, T100 rank 81, VFM 70.80
- 62 Chiberta, France
Green fee €128, T100 rank 88, VFM 70.64
- 63 Halmstad (North), Sweden
Green fee €156, T100 rank 79, VFM 70.64
- 64 Barseback (Ocean), Sweden
Green fee €124, T100 rank 91, VFM 70.42
- 65 Royal Antwerp, Belgium
Green fee €185, T100 rank 68, VFM 70.38
- 66 Vasatorp (Tournament), Sweden
Green fee €137, T100 rank 87, VFM 70.32
- 67 Real El Prat (Rosa), Spain
Green fee €165, T100 rank 78, VFM 70.26
- 68 Vanajanlinna, Finland
Green fee €125, T100 rank 96, VFM 69.95
- 69 PGA National Turkey (Sultan), Turkey
Green fee €190, T100 rank 71, VFM 69.92
- 70 The Scandinavian (New), Denmark
Green fee €240, T100 rank 43, VFM 69.83
- 71 Modry Las, Poland
Green fee €68, T100 rank 114, VFM 69.57
- 72 Quinta do Lago (South), Portugal
Green fee €243, T100 rank 46, VFM 69.51
- 73 Royal Bled, Slovenia
Green fee €280, T100 rank 27, VFM 69.48
- 74 Ålands (Castle), Finland
Green fee €140, T100 rank 94, VFM 69.34
- 75 The Scandinavian (Old), Denmark
Green fee €240, T100 rank 53, VFM 69.20
- 76 Granville, France
Green fee €105, T100 rank 104, VFM 69.13
- 77 Bernardus, Netherlands
Green fee €255, T100 rank 47, VFM 68.88
- 78 Hoge Kleij, Netherlands
Green fee €135, T100 rank 100, VFM 68.75
- 79 Marco Simone, Italy
Green fee €195, T100 rank 80, VFM 68.62
- 80 Real Sotogrande, Spain
Green fee €385, T100 rank 10, VFM 68.59
- 81 Real Neguri, Spain
Green fee €251, T100 rank 55, VFM 68.55
- 82 PGA National Czech Republic,
Czech Republic
Green fee €158, T100 rank 97, VFM 68.22
- 83 Terras da Comporta (Torre),
Portugal
Green fee €200, T100 rank 84, VFM 68.09
- 84 Royal Ostend, Belgium
Green fee €115, T100 rank 108, VFM 68.07
- 85 Bois d'Arlon (Heathland), Belgium
Green fee €110, T100 rank 110, VFM 68.04
- 86 The National, Turkey
Green fee €165, T100 rank 95, VFM 68.02
- 87 Villa de Madrid (Black), Spain
Green fee €178, T100 rank 89, VFM 68.00
- 88 Ljunghusens, Sweden
Green fee €138, T100 rank 101, VFM 67.92
- 89 Silkeborg, Denmark
Green fee €107, T100 rank 112, VFM 67.91
- 90 La Reserva Club, Spain
Green fee €275, T100 rank 52, VFM 67.56
- 91 Cologne Refrath, Germany
Green fee €140, T100 rank 53, VFM 66.40
- 92 San Lorenzo, Portugal
Green fee €143, T100 rank 113, VFM 65.97
- 93 Costa Navarino (Dunes), Greece
Green fee €223, T100 rank 92, VFM 65.33
- 94 Cabot Bordeaux (Vignes), France
Green fee €195, T100 rank 103, VFM 64.77
- 95 Ullna, Sweden
Green fee €238, T100 rank 93, VFM 64.50
- 96 Real Pedrena, Spain
Green fee €350, T100 rank 57, VFM 64.46
- 97 Finca Cortesin, Spain
Green fee €365, T100 rank 62, VFM 63.24
- 98 Real Valderrama, Spain
Green fee €600, T100 rank 6, VFM 62.77
- 99 Costa Navarino (Bay), Greece
Green fee €223, T100 rank 109, VFM 62.53
- 100 Costa Navarino (Olympic), Greece
Green fee €223, T100 rank 115, VFM 61.69

Private clubs that are ineligible

Morfontaine (Grand Parours), Les Bordes (New), Vidauban, Les Bordes (Old), Crownwood, Morfontaine (Valliere), Real Puerta de Hierro (Arriba), Real Club La Moraleja (No.3), Real Las Brisas, Real Puerta de Hierro (Abajo), Domaine Imperial, Real Sociedad Hipica, Vilamoura Golf (Els Club). Closed for renovation: Troia, Le Golf National (Albatros).

Green fee notes

West Cliffs and Praia d'El Rey's price is an average of their €85 fee in July and August and the €122 in September. An average of the variations in dynamic pricing is used frequently, including for Visby, The National (Links) (available at times for as little as €64), Kytaja, Las Colinas, Alands, Esbjerg (Marbaek) and San Lorenzo. Ullna's price includes lunch. Noordwijkse is €120 for the nine holes that are open, with its other half being renovated.