

# Villa d'Este Golf Club

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This view of par 5 17, with the 18th beyond through the trees, well illustrates the beautiful forest setting of Villa d'Este's back 9

## What the critics say...

Beautiful, mature, low-par-challenge layout in two distinct loops – the tree-lined front 9 tightly fitting into rolling ground east of the stylish clubhouse, to the west of which the back 9 makes a superb natural foray into a forest; both excellent habitats for inland golf. The design (enhanced from Gannon's original) has a distinctly 'Surrey' feel - for its trees, bunkering and often raised greensites. Sloping and occasionally tiered putting surfaces, and a lake, add to the fun. Impressive Alpine vistas on a clear day. A private club.

For long (like the eponymous hotel, with which it has historic connections) Villa d'Este has been an Italian destination for the golfing cognoscenti. Its Libro d'Oro visitors' book includes not just the pawmarks of Clark Gable and the ubiquitous (in old world golf tourism, at least) Bing Crosby, but signatures rather more upmarket: Alfonso (Spain), Constantine (Greece), Edward (England), Leopold (Belgium) - all Kings: beat that!

It was back in 1925, when the company which owned the hotel commissioned a team to find a location to match the stunning setting of the hotel, and then design and build a golf course, opening a year later. Lord Albergo Bellinzaghi

Locatelli, Amerigo Ponti and Guglielmo d'Ombre made up the committee thus formed, and, at a time where there were relatively few courses in Italy, you would be forgiven for saying that they needed a wing and a prayer. No surprise then that they chose one of the few (if only?) golf designers also to hold holy orders, Peter Gannon (some of whose work may be seen at Ugolino – Nov 2007 pp122-4). Although the course has since been modified, it must still be seen as a testament to his skill: there is no doubt that he was a character, and this is reflected in what we see today.

The club's website describes it thus: "the course of Villa d'Este Golf Club was built

on the Como hills dominating the lake of Montorfano, in the suggestive [sic!] and romantic perimeter of more than 30,000 pines, chestnuts and birches, incomparable natural beauty, a corner of Paradise that has been and is one of the destinations of many refined golfers". Many club websites tend to err on hyperbole, but we assure you that this one does not – even on the appallingly wet day when we inspected, photographed and then played here.

Anyway, the course is today regularly voted by Italian golfers as amongst their top ten best designs, confirmed by the very impressive list of championships played over it. Until we've seen all the

courses in Italy, we cannot give our conclusive opinion, but if Villa d'Este is toppled from our own top ten (in which it currently stands), all the more reason to play all those above it as well.

One important note to heed: the hotel of the same name is at Cernobbio, a few miles north of Como; the golf club is a little to the south - at Montorfano. Of course, with plenty of spare time, it is a nice mistake to make: both are wonderful places. ■



Villa d'Este's long downhill par 3 14th wins gold for its classic bunkering, appropriately large but sloping green, fairness and magical setting – oh, and par here is a very good score!

THE POCKET GUIDE TO GOLF COURSES

Key to Rating System

Design Ratings

Between one and three stars are awarded to courses whose design quality is particularly commendable:

★★★

For courses which approach perfection.

Courses worth crossing the world to play

★★

For excellence: as for ★★★ but with perhaps the occasional blemish or weak hole causing the distinction – the art and presence factors are still prerequisites.

Courses worth crossing a continent to play

★

For courses representing very good design quality: as for \*\* but with perhaps some more blemishes, e.g. some weak holes and/or scoring less in the art/presence department.

Courses worth crossing a country to play

↗

For courses we recommend for a fuller experience of the best in golf course design. Courses generally (but not always) with the potential for elevation to a star rating

Facility Ratings

In summary, the ratings indicate golf facilities as:

★★★★★ exceptional, including hotel standard accommodation

★★★★ first class, with all facilities the golfer might reasonably expect

★★★ good, with most facilities the golfer might reasonably expect

★★ adequate for golfing requirements

★ basic for its purpose

Hole Ratings

Based on 'traffic light principles': red – yellow – green, from weak to strong with yellow representing an 'average' hole. Purple holes are selected for historic or unusual characteristics. Additionally, above green a special 'goldrating': a hole worth playing the whole course for.



Price Bands

Based on the most expensive green fee, per head (i.e. high season weekends)

|      |                |      |                |
|------|----------------|------|----------------|
| €€€€ | more than €200 | ££££ | more than £133 |
| €€€  | €100 - €200    | £££  | £67 - £133     |
| €€   | €60 - €100     | ££   | £40 - £67      |
| €    | below €60      | £    | below £40      |

Course reviews and articles featured are extracts from *The Pocket Guide to Golf Courses* series.

| Scorecard |                        | m     | Par |   | m     | Par |   |
|-----------|------------------------|-------|-----|---|-------|-----|---|
|           | Villa d'Este Golf Club | 1     | 534 | 5 | 10    | 171 | 3 |
|           |                        | 2     | 353 | 4 | 11    | 377 | 4 |
|           |                        | 3     | 188 | 3 | 12    | 330 | 4 |
|           |                        | 4     | 293 | 4 | 13    | 486 | 5 |
|           |                        | 5     | 124 | 3 | 14    | 194 | 3 |
|           |                        | 6     | 283 | 4 | 15    | 402 | 4 |
|           |                        | 7     | 176 | 3 | 16    | 149 | 3 |
|           |                        | 8     | 379 | 4 | 17    | 458 | 5 |
|           |                        | 9     | 342 | 4 | 18    | 309 | 4 |
|           |                        | 2,672 | 34  |   | 2,876 | 35  |   |
|           |                        |       |     |   | 5,548 | 69  |   |

**+ Course Details:**  
 Circolo Golf Villa d'Este, Via Cantù 13, 22030 Montorfano (CO), Italy  
 Tel: +39 031 200200  
 info@golfvilladeste.com  
 www.golfvilladeste.com  
 Pocket Guide ratings ★★★★★ ★ €€

| Scorecard |                             | yds   | Par |   | yds   | Par |   |
|-----------|-----------------------------|-------|-----|---|-------|-----|---|
|           | Trevose Golf & Country Club | 1     | 449 | 4 | 10    | 510 | 5 |
|           |                             | 2     | 425 | 4 | 11    | 225 | 3 |
|           |                             | 3     | 173 | 3 | 12    | 464 | 4 |
|           |                             | 4     | 504 | 5 | 13    | 511 | 5 |
|           |                             | 5     | 471 | 4 | 14    | 320 | 4 |
|           |                             | 6     | 336 | 4 | 15    | 338 | 4 |
|           |                             | 7     | 427 | 4 | 16    | 229 | 3 |
|           |                             | 8     | 160 | 3 | 17    | 432 | 4 |
|           |                             | 9     | 515 | 5 | 18    | 478 | 4 |
|           |                             | 3,460 | 36  |   | 3,507 | 36  |   |
|           |                             |       |     |   | 6,967 | 72  |   |

**+ Course Details:**  
 Trevose Golf & Country Club, Constantine Bay, Padstow, Cornwall PL28 8JB UK  
 Tel: +44 1841 520208  
 info@trevose-gc.co.uk  
 www.trevose-gc.co.uk  
 Pocket Guide ratings ★★★★★ ★ ££

+ Details:

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# Trevose Golf & Country Club



This view from near the clubhouse towards the par 5 4th green (surfwards but hidden by a browful of revetted bunkers), and the Atlantic cliffs beyond, conjures up the essence of Trevose

## What the critics say...

An open, atmospheric and engaging mix of raw and tamer linksland provides the scene for a well-routed, well-bunkered and potentially challenging round of golf, whose difficulty increases according to the strength of the wind and its impact on the many holes that can play long against par. Although only once close to the surf, don't allow the widespread sea views to distract you, especially at the undulating, occasionally raised greensites.

For the second edition in a row we feature a course owing its origins to an amateur archaeologist. In all other respects, Delhi and Trevose seem as if on different planets: the former tightly carved through jungle, the latter on windswept open linksland. But it was the interest of Dr Penrose Williams in a holy well that first brought him to Constantine Bay in the early 1900s. His passion to permanently expose the well, which reputedly dates from the 3rd century AD and adjoins the remains of St Constantine's church on what is now Trevose's Short Course, required him to purchase the land outright.

But what to do, once the excavation was complete? Fortunately for the golfing world, the name Harry Shapland Colt meant something to Dr Williams, and he commissioned him to design what is now known as The Championship Course (within today's 36 hole complex). As was often his practice, Colt brought in one of his partners, Charles Alison, to supervise construction. Opened in 1925, the design was later revised by Sir Guy Campbell, which, interestingly, gives Trevose exactly the same pedigree as the significantly superior links at Rye (in Sussex), with whom it shares the all-important quality of understatement. (If you get the chance,

play both and don't underestimate the difficulty of either.)

Over the past half century, since the family's outright purchase of the course in 1955, Trevose has become synonymous with the name Gammon. Nick, the current manager, is the grandson of John, who first came here in 1936 and, then with a partner, took the course over from Dr Williams during WW2. The current extensive 'holiday golf escape' facility was the brainchild of John, extensively developed since the 1960s into its current state by his son Peter, and now, under Nick's watch, the club has recently hosted

the Men's English Amateur Strokeplay Championship, for the Brabazon Trophy. With accommodation for 120, tennis, swimming pool, beauty salon and comprehensive clubhouse facilities, family holidays are very much encouraged here.

So, whether it's for serious or holiday golf (or indeed both) and playable all year round, Trevose makes an excellent base, especially with the further attractions of nearby St Enodoc (see Edition VIII), West Cornwall (Lelant) and Cornwall's generous handful of other quality courses. ■



Foreshortened here by a zoom lens, Trevoze's long par 4 10th requires two good hits (the second over a stream, out of shot) - and then hope for two putts on a green that slopes more than it first seems

# Mind Game or Body Game

After his recent lists of Dos and Don'ts for both mind and body, Peter Millhouse shows how sometimes the body can play games with the mind (or is it the other way round?).

Golf is a circular game, best played with your body at its core, with the hands and arms keeping the club in 'orbit' by gently pushing away from the centre. For this reason a good grip, stance, posture and aim are essential. But there's more to it than this.

Even with good basics, if you want to strike the ball solidly, you and your mind must come to terms with some strange sensations: for example we are told to 'keep the body still'. The mind understands what is meant by this, but the body decides to move anyway, for, to hit the ball, the body must pivot right and left (or vice versa for 'lefties'). To play well, your mind and body must be in harmony.

Another conundrum to illustrate this: the hands and arms appear to 'open' the clubface for the backswing, but do not 'close' it on the downswing.

Let's examine this one in a bit more detail. Here is a quick way to understand how you need to leave the clubface apparently "open" (as understood by the mind) halfway through the downswing, for it to close automatically (with

the turn of your body) and thus make a correct strike:

- Stand up straight, arms by your side
- Turn your right hand so the palm faces forward and the thumb points away from your body
- Lift your right arm level with your shoulder: notice where your palm is pointing
- Now swing it back to the right, parallel with your shoulders, and notice the palm again.

A change similar to this happens in the golf swing. If, to your mind, the face seems "open" on the way down, don't panic, it's correct: just wait for your body to pivot and bring it back to square.

Bad golfers think they are doing one thing, when they are actually doing something else. Good golfers reduce such gaps in perception, with mind and body working in greater harmony.

What are you doing?

Good golfing!



## + Details:

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**Never stop learning – or dreaming. On the day this photo was taken, Malcolm (left) holed in one at Valderrama!**



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The Female Perspective

# Two keys to lifelong golfing harmony

Sarah Sherson puts a couple of fundamentals into balance, whilst planning her next dinner party...

The Season over, grouse hung, drawn and slaughtered (at table, of course), and school holidays (with all that 'we will all walk the cliffs for five miles, lunch and back before "cook" produces wonders for eighteen famished carnivores' jolliness) spent, it's time for a relaxing-rejuvenating (capitals intended) SPA. I wonder if 'Spa' is in fact a Greek acronym ('Soothing Preparations from Athens'?) meaning 'to rejuvenate the bones' - one thing golf does is to weary the bones, particularly feet.

Our 21st century mission should be to golf into our nineties. So what key elements make a good female golfer?

I will cite but two simple fundamentals: balance and rhythm.

Many a future Diva works at her game religiously, yet few make the grade to singing at the opera house. Three reasons why: balance, BALANCE and B-A-L-A-N-C-E. Golfing guru David Leadbetter agrees - and about feet, too. Visit his clinic at Champions Gate in Orlando, Florida and he'll make you play shots unshod, naked to the earth. Why? Good feet are essential to good balance. With good balance that swing of yours could win many a golfing Oscar. Look at any top player and you see it all the time, with every swing, every different kind of shot - Ernie Els' rock solid balance, in tune with his harmonic symphony of a swing, is just one example.

So, if your golf swing dances you shoe-shuffle style all over the floor, your golfing curtain calls are likely to be premature, especially if occasionally you descend into the orchestra pit, twisting an ankle as you fall off the tee. (If you don't believe me, then remember the tale of the golf pro who broke his leg on a tee at no less than The Open Championship. True story!)

Recalling Ernie, you will also increasingly need Rhythm, Ryth-ye-mmm, or Rthy-mmmmm - the variations are up to you, as long as the theme remains constant: consistent and repeatable tempo. Nick Faldo's tune is 'feel your beat and repeat, repeat'. Make this your tonic, if it works for you - everyone is different. 'One----Two', 'One-and-Two' or 'One-and-Twooooo' are all OK - just find your own metronome speed.

Of course, this all applies to The Male of The Species, too. But we ladies multi-task (don't we?!).

Whilst championing our balance and rhythm, we are, of course, also planning our next dinner party guest combo and menu (balance and rhythm again! - right...). This is where the art of playing mixed 'gruesomes' (foursomes) can come unstuck: us hostesses are so bent on organising wonderful lunches, suppers and general 'hooooohays' that we forget that all our men are really interested in is 'Zach is now 2,214 under par against Tiger, and how good MY game is today'. If, whilst

whacking a five iron 165 yards to three feet, you can plan the 'DP' menu, discuss Obama's chances, Jemima's GCSE's and hairdressers, you are a seasoned operator. For this, balance and rhythm must be all but automatic. Sometimes better to hold court gliding up the fairways with another of us females - and leave their Lordships to admire each other's swings with bravado Encores?!

But please don't overdo it, or your feet won't even take you into your eighties. Time for that spa...



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## Summary descriptions

### Facility/design ratings

### Contact details

### Scorecards

Metres from back tee; gold, green, yellow, purple or red rating of holes – strong to weak design.

### Outstanding photographs

## SOTOGRADE

Trent Jones Snr 1964 €€€ H: M 25, L 30, J 25/30

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Gibraltar: A383 from La Línea; after 9km r onto A7; km130 exit for Sotogrande/Valderrama; 1st r at rbt; after 500m at rbt l for Sotogrande Costa; follow road for 2.8km to club entrance on l.

|   | m    | p  |    | m    | p  |
|---|------|----|----|------|----|
| 1 | 356  | 4  | 10 | 405  | 4  |
| 2 | 473  | 5  | 11 | 330  | 4  |
| 3 | 304  | 4  | 12 | 522  | 5  |
| 4 | 208  | 3  | 13 | 189  | 3  |
| 5 | 321  | 4  | 14 | 453  | 5  |
| 6 | 466  | 5  | 15 | 392  | 4  |
| 7 | 382  | 4  | 16 | 355  | 4  |
| 8 | 185  | 3  | 17 | 157  | 3  |
| 9 | 330  | 4  | 18 | 396  | 4  |
|   | 3025 | 36 |    | 3199 | 36 |
|   |      |    |    | 6224 | 72 |

The first Trent Jones in Europe, this excellent, grand-scale, tree-lined out and back course over mainly mildly undulating ground is fair, and pretty roomy. Large, well-bunkered, sloping greens, sometimes defended by water, reward accurate shot-making. The best Costa del Sol design.

N.B. There is also a 9 hole course (1299m).



Gold-rated p4:7 is a downhill right to left dogleg, with a pretty green surrounded by bunkers and defended on the right by a lake; trees form the backdrop. The less you get round the corner with your drive, the more you play towards the water with your approach shot – but it will never completely escape your mind!

26 Costa del Sol



Understated p5:2 is a gently undulating dogleg, sweeping right to left around two carefully placed bunkers to a raised green protected by sand and framed by cork trees. Plenty of room to enable you to play it well – or not so well. The hole wins gold for its strategic qualities – several options to plot your way around all that sand.

Sotogrande has always been an up-market place, but one has to admire the foresight of the original promoters. Not only was it the only significant development (which continues to this day) in the hitherto unexploited west of the Costa del Sol, but they brought in a famous American course designer for his first work in continental Europe. An American-style course on a grand scale, albeit with Mediterranean clothing, is what they got: Sotogrande is now the granddaddy of the Gibraltar area, just as Las Brisas (also by Trent Jones Snr) is for Marbella. The feeling of space at both is refreshing in comparison with many of the courses along the coast, especially those closer to Marbella. Sotogrande is actually a hybrid: there are quite distinct differences between the Mediterranean and American elements – 2-11 and 15-16 are 'Hispano-American', i.e. 'Trent Jones' style is imposed on undulating ground bedecked with cork and olive trees, whereas 1, 12-14 and 17-18 would not be out of place in Florida (i.e. generally flat, framed by clumps of palms, some very tall – especially left of 17,



The undulating tree-lined fairway and bunkered raised sloping green of p4:9 typify the Mediterranean elements of Sotogrande's design.

where they make a towering statement to balance the water on the right). Both elements respect careful driving, as the generally large, amply-bunkered greens reward accurate iron shots with birdies. Yet for the rest of us, there is still at least a sporting chance of a par – gross, or net(!). In attaining ★★, the world class quality of the Hispano-American holes just outweighed the negating inconsistency of the Florida sweep on the way home. Although there are others with potential to outrank it (either through maturity or enhancement – e.g. La Reserva or Málaga), Sotogrande is currently the best design on the Costa del Sol.

Costa del Sol 27

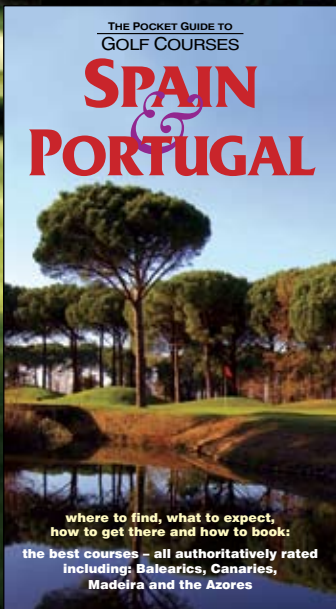
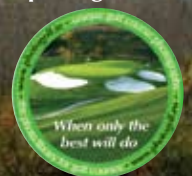
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