



The Rolex

WORLD'S TOP 1000

GOLF COURSES by D'Algue Selection

Press Release
November 2010

Following the success of Europe's Top 1000 Golf Courses – Peugeot Golf Guide – which we have published these past 15 years, D'Algue Selection has now put together an even more ambitious guide detailing the top 1000 golf courses worldwide.

Gaëtan Mourgue d'Algue, one of France's finest golfers of his generation, founder of Golf Européen magazine and the Trophée Lancôme, as well as being one of the main instigators of the European Tour, ably supported by his daughter Kristel, NCAA individual champion and former European Women's Tour member, and Bruce Critchley, Walker Cup player and respected commentator with Sky Sports UK, persuaded Rolex to come on board for this far-reaching venture. As a major sponsor of golf globally and with deep respect for the game's values and traditions, Rolex is a natural partner of D'Algue Selection which has produced a genuine and totally independent world ranking for golf courses.

There are some 32000 courses to be found around the world and the very best of them have been assiduously assessed by a network of over 200 independent inspectors, consisting of former champions, professional golfers, sports journalists and globe-trotting players, all with a passion for the game. Each course has been the subject of an in depth examination based on a 100 point questionnaire to establish levels of site excellence, quality of course architecture and standards of maintenance. To complete the picture we have produced a comprehensive list of practical information, some recommended hotels, restaurants and sites of local interest, together with local maps to help with ease of access. As an extra bonus, the book also contains a copy of the Simplified Rules of Golf published by the Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews and the United States Golf Association.

Of the 1000 listed courses, 362 are to be found in the United States, 282 in Europe, 237 in Asia-Pacific and 119 elsewhere. A top score of 100 has been awarded to just 15 exceptional courses, each of singular historical and architectural merit, of which there are 7 in the British Isles (Carnoustie, Muirfield, The Old Course at St Andrews, Royal Birkdale, the Championship Course at Portmarnock, the New Course at Sunningdale and the Old Course at Royal County Down), 6 in the United States (Cypress Point, Torrey Pines (South), Augusta National, Pine Valley, Bethpage (Black), and Oakmont), with 2 in Australia (Kingston Heath and Royal Adelaide).

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Immediately after these 15 courses, the next score is 95 achieved by 73 courses of which 39 are American. Of the 165 courses scoring 90, 87 are American.

In Europe, England is the most widely represented with 60 courses, followed by Scotland (43), Ireland (31), then Spain (23), France (22), Italy (16), Germany (13) and Sweden (13). While Scotland and Ireland have the finest collection of links courses, England is blessed with some exceptional inland layouts and Great Britain as a whole is of course where so many of golf's great course architects grew up and contributed to what is still regarded as the Golden Age for course design throughout the world.

Generally speaking, very few new courses have opened in Europe since 2005 and only a few countries can seriously talk about a development phase. They include Turkey, where new resorts offer the best value for money, and Russia, which is coming around to a sport still reserved for a happy few but where 24 courses are under construction.

In the United States, the halcyon days are gone and new courses have become few and far. The country and its 17000 golf courses have fallen prey to the economic crisis. Having said that, the United States remains the world's leading golf country through the excellence of its private courses, the variety of public courses and quality and understanding of service.

The names of famous resorts such as Pebble Beach in California, Pinehurst in North Carolina, Kiawah Island in South Carolina, TPC Sawgrass in Florida...and now Bandon Dunes in Oregon are still the stuff of dreams for all golf-lovers. They are the "global golfing experience" that people come to play in the United States, sites where they will also find the greatest achievements of top course designers past and present.

Right now, the real golf boom is in Asia and particularly China, where 40 courses have found a place in the Guide. For the most part they are located close to the major cities, elsewhere predominantly in the south of the country, and on Hainan Island. India too would seem to be a country with unlimited potential thanks to space available and a burgeoning economy.

In the Asia-Pacific region, golf was first established in Australia with courses dating from the early 1920s and with many to be found round Melbourne and its magnificent Sandbelt. In all, the country has provided the Guide with 65 courses. No surprise that Japan comes third with 36 entries out of a collection of 2,500, mostly the work of home-grown architects and the majority dating from 1957, the year Japan won the Canada Cup.

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As for the rest of the world, Canada is leading the way with 36 courses selected in the Guide, enjoying beautiful landscapes and announcing over 1 million golfers. South Africa also has outstanding natural beauty but golf development has inevitably been held back by the country's ongoing economic and social problems; that said, some outstanding new courses are starting to emerge. In Central America, principally Mexico, today's top architects, such as Nicklaus, Weiskopf and Norman have helped with the creation of a number of high-end quality resorts. Argentina, a nation blessed with more internationally famous golfers than you will find in the whole of Latin America put together, has long traditions in the game but relatively few courses to show for it.

This initial Global Guide has already received an enthusiastic welcome from several well-know journalists.

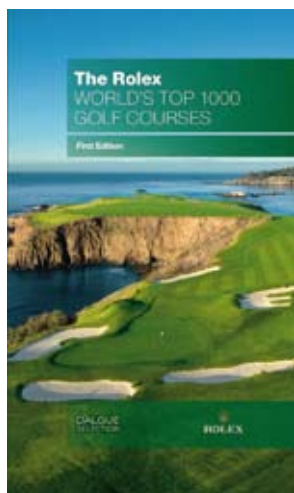
John Hopkins of The London Times: "Call yourself a serious golfer? Then this is the book for you. Don't leave home without it. It is invaluable."

Dan Jenkins, Golf Digest, "The spirit of golf is very much alive in this splendid Rolex book. Your duck hook or soaring slice can't possibly spoil it for you."

Spencer Robinson, Asian Golf Monthly, "This work will prove to be an invaluable source of information for all those who are intrigued with the dramatic growth of golf in the Asia Pacific."

Finally, Jim Nantz, CBS Sports, "The fun of discussing the Rolex Top 1000 can only be topped by the actual quest of playing them."

The Rolex World's Top 1000 Golf Courses is on sale mainly at Amazon at the price of 25 pounds sterling, 35 US dollars, 35 euros.



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