

**THE BEST OF GOLF IN**

# FRANCE

**A 40-PAGE GUIDE TO GOLF IN  
THE HOST COUNTRY OF THIS  
YEAR'S RYDER CUP**

**WIN**  
A luxury Paris  
golf break worth  
£3,000!

**PARISIAN KNIGHTS**

The capital boasts Europe's two best courses plus Ryder Cup host

**VARIETY AND VALUE**

Easy access and 50 courses in Normandy and Brittany

**BEST-KEPT SECRET**

Classic courses and renowned wines combine in Aquitaine

**SOUTHERN COMFORT**

Class, style and charm in Nice, Provence and Cote d'Azur

**PLUS: AN EXCEPTIONAL TRIO AND INCREDIBLE DEAL ON THE OPAL COAST**

## REGIONAL GUIDE

# THE SOUTH

Europe's most cultivated and sun-kissed playground is also home to more than 150 golf courses, including the No.1 ranked resort in our *Golf World* Top-100.

**W**hile it's fair to say that many of France's better-known courses can be found in and around Paris – or even further north – southern France has enough top quality courses and fringe benefits to attract even the most discerning golfer. For a start, there's the climate. Blessed with more sunshine

than the rest of the nation, the prime golf season in the south stretches from late April until early October. Then there's the cuisine. In this part of the world, the thrill of the golf is comfortably matched by the sumptuous post-round dining options. You can't leave Provence without sampling Bouillabaisse (a fish soup/stew), pastis (aniseed flavoured liqueur),

Daube (a beef stew) and the *pièce de résistance*, tapenade – an olive dip made of black olives, capers, anchovies, garlic and olive oil that is usually served with croutons or breadsticks.

And finally, there's the choice. Boasting well over 150 courses, a single visit will only scratch the surface of all the region has to offer. To make a visit to the south



Combining five-star accommodation with Michelin Star dining and incredible golf, Terre Blanche is the star attraction in the south of France.

more manageable, our advice is to divide it into three distinct regions: Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur; Rhône Alpes; and Midi Pyrénées Languedoc-Roussillon.

#### Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur

If you're a frequent reader of *Golf World*, you'll know there are significant differences between the golf courses featured in our Top-100 Courses ranking and those featured in our Top-100 Resorts ranking. In many instances, a great resort golf course won't cut it in our rankings that focus solely on the quality of the golf course. There are exceptions to the rule, of course, and it just so happens that one of them can be found in the south-east corner of France.

Terre Blanche is No.1 in our Top 100 Resorts Continental Europe ranking. Its flagship course, the Chateau, is also ranked 14th in our Top 100 Courses Continental Europe ranking. Nestled in

unspoiled lush nature, the resort combines five-star accommodation with Michelin-star dining and world-class golf. The resort is part of the prestigious European Tour Properties portfolio, which gives it access to a wide range of consultancy services from expert agronomists. As a result, it's always immaculately maintained. "Terre Blanche is like an oasis to me," says its German owner Dietmar Hopp. "An oasis which is soothing to the soul."

The resort boasts two Dave Thomas-designed championship courses, both of which blend seamlessly into the existing landscape. The Chateau is the stiffer challenge and, as a result, is the choice for hosting professional events, while the Le Riou course is largely reserved for members and guests. Aside from the excellent variety of holes, the Chateau is characterised by constantly changing vistas – from mountains to valleys to

woodland to ravines to lakes and streams and, of course, the famous chateau itself.

Terre Blanche may be the jewel in the crown of the region, but it's by no means the only option. In fact, there are some 63 other courses in Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur. Take Dolce Fregate, where superb Provencal cuisine and wines can be savoured alongside scintillating Mediterranean views, superb golf courses and four-star accommodation.

While in the region it would be folly not to visit Pont Royal in Mallemort. Seve Ballesteros' only design in France has lost its way on several occasions during the past couple of decades, but the resort is in the early stages of an impressive revamp that will see a seven-figure sum invested into the golf course, practice facilities and clubhouse.

The major attraction at Pont Royal is the views. The course looks out over the Alpilles and Luberon, Durance Valley ▶



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