

High Tee

Next-gen golf resorts are prioritizing good design and unique amenities

by Truc Nguyen

During the pandemic, golf saw an upswing when new players took up the game as a safe socially distanced activity. Since then, interest has continued to increase—and attract a whole new demo. Once the domain of the middle-aged white man, golf courses are now seeing unprecedented activity from juniors, people of colour and women.

With global golf-tourism projected to grow to a market value of nearly US\$6 billion in the next two years, savvy opportunists are opening golf resorts to meet the demand. But they aren't just your traditional links: The new hot spots go big on luxe amenities, chic accommodations and unique après-golf experiences. Here are five notable properties at home and across the globe to help you tee off your summer travel plans.

1.7K
The approximate number of golf resorts and country clubs in Canada alone



PHOTOGRAPHS BY (BLACK BEAR RIDGE) DOBRI BEBACE (PHOTOGRAPHY); (TERRAS DA COMPORTA) JAMES HOGG, (CABOT SAINT LUCIA) JACOB SJOMAN, (INNESS) ADRIAN GAUT; (BLACK DESERT RESORT) BRIAN DARR

1. Childhood friends Alex Sharpe and Cale Fair purchased **BLACK BEAR RIDGE** in Belleville, Ont., in 2021 and spent the next two years transforming it into a hip all-season resort to attract Millennial golfers.

In addition to two courses and a driving range, the property has a unique “bocce golf” course, which combines elements of mini-putt and bocce ball. BBR also offers activities like yoga and fishing, and it’s situated on 365 hectares with trails for snowshoeing, biking and hiking.

“BBR is not your dad’s golf course,” says Sharpe. Next up as part of the \$1.54 billion redevelopment: Fair and Sharpe plan to add a spa, outdoor event spaces and residential housing. blackbearridge.ca

2. Located an hour south of Lisbon on the Alentejo coast, this golf destination in Carvalhal, Portugal, features bioclimatic architecture and uses green energy, making it a distinctly eco-conscious destination. “We prove that luxury and sustainability are compatible,” says golf director Rodrigo Ulrich.

TERRAS DA COMPORTA’s award-winning Dunas Golf Course opened in October, and a second 18-hole course is in the works to open this year. Development plans also include everything from a racquet club to a co-working space to equestrian facilities. comporta.com

3. “When I first saw the site, I knew it was truly spectacular,” says Ben Cowan-Dewar, CEO and co-founder of The Cabot Collection, developers and operators of five luxury golf resorts. **CABOT SAINT LUCIA**, perched on the northern tip of the Caribbean island, started welcoming guests in December and is a jewel in the crown for

the Toronto-based company, which has properties in Canada, the U.S. and the U.K.

In addition to its coastal links, the resort offers tennis, pickleball and basketball and will soon add a Scandi-inspired hydro-circuit spa. Its three-storey clubhouse hosts a restaurant focusing on local cuisines, which rounds out the more casual dining options: a course-side wood-fired-pizza food truck and toes-in-sand beach dining. cabotsaintlucia.com

4. This resort in Accord, N.Y., was named after American landscape painter George Inness and designed as a pastoral escape for weary city dwellers.

Opened in 2021, the 91-hectare property’s accommodations include 28 cabins and a 12-room farmhouse. Its restaurant, which has panoramic views of the Hudson Valley, serves seasonal dishes inspired by the on-site organic farm. It also has tennis courts, two saltwater pools and an archery range. And in June, it will add a spa and gym.

INNESS’s nine-hole golf course is nestled in a bucolic valley between the Catskill and Shawangunk mountain ranges.



The experience here is purposefully unpretentious: Walking the course is encouraged, and keeping score and proper golf attire are optional. inness.co

5. BLACK DESERT RESORT, in Ivins, Utah, cut the ribbon on its 19-hole championship course last spring. The 255-hectare resort, set at the convergence of three major ecosystems—the Mojave Desert, the Great Basin and the Colorado Plateau—is punctuated by red-rock cliffs and black lava fields.

This fall, a sprawling entertainment complex will open in time for the Black Desert Championship PGA tournament. Shopping, a spa, live-music venues, a water park and more than 20 restaurants are a handful of the many amenities in the works. blackdesertresort.com

