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# A golf getaway with star power

MONTEREY PENINSULA, CALIF.

## Carmel area renowned for beauty, Hollywood ties

Brian Kendall
For Metro Canada

Even now, almost 30 years after his wildly publicized reign as the town's mayor, Clint Eastwood remains a towering figure in Carmel-by-the-Sea.

Tourists fantasize about bumping into him at his restaurant at Mission Ranch, the Hollywood icon's nine-hectare property just outside of town, and look for him as they explore the tony streets and hidden courtyards of this unendingly charming coastal community on California's Monterey Peninsula.

But these days Eastwood is more likely to be found teeing it up at nearby Pebble Beach Golf Links, the fabled course he co-owns with Arnold Palmer and former Major League Baseball commissioner Peter Ueberroth.

One of the finest, most dramatic courses anywhere, Pebble Beach is the undisputed golf headliner of a famously seductive peninsula two hours south of San Francisco that includes the communities of Carmel-by-the-Sea, Pacific Grove, Seaside and Pebble Beach.

**Pebble Beach golf course in Monterey, Calif., offers dramatic views from its emerald fairways.** ISTOCK

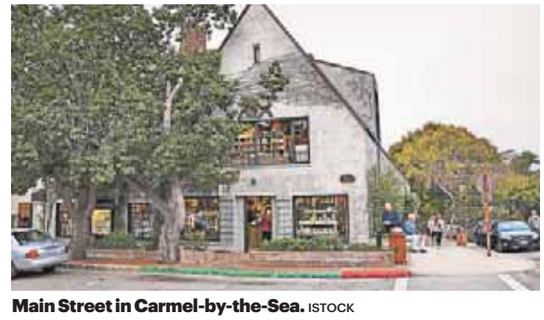
Pebble Beach, a bucket-list course for every golfer, charges a green fee of $495, one of the most expensive in the game. But the good news is that golfers don't have to break the bank to enjoy memorable golf on the Monterey Peninsula.

Pebble Beach's sister courses, Spyglass Hill Golf Course and the Links at Spanish Bay, both offer spectacular ocean views at more palatable prices.

Another local beauty is Del Monte Golf Course, opened in 1897 and the oldest course in continuous operation west of the Mississippi. Two recently renovated layouts, Poppy Hills Golf Club and Quail Lodge Golf Course, are also highly regarded designs.

And a special favourite of knowledgeable golfers is Pacific Grove Golf Links, an affordable oceanfront beauty known as the "other Pebble."

Between rounds, head back to Carmel to explore a coastal town jam-packed with upscale restaurants, hidden courtyards, quirky passageways, au courant art galleries and elegantly cosy inns.



**Main Street in Carmel-by-the-Sea.** ISTOCK

One of the most popular places to stay is Cypress Inn, co-owned by another Hollywood legend and local resident, Doris Day. The hit recordings of the now 91-year-old Day are piped into the 44 sunny rooms of the 1929 local landmark.

Carmel's small downtown is an architectural mishmash of English-style country houses, Swiss chalets and, most notably, the 21 whimsical fairy tale cottages built by local architect Hugh Comstock starting in the 1920s. Eastwood, who was elected for a two-year term in 1986 on a pro-progress platform, dismissed these Comstock Cottages as "Smurf homes."

Once a bohemian refuge for artists such as writer Jack London and photographers Ansel Adams and Edward Weston, Carmel now numbers among the most exclusive addresses in California. Real estate prices soar ever higher on the approach to Carmel Bay, where the sea ebbs and crashes against a long white-sand beach.

Glimpsed at cliff-top across the bay are the emerald fairways of famed Pebble Beach, for golfers the most alluring of all the wonders on the Monterey Peninsula.

For more golf destinations, visit Brian's website at canadiangolftraveller.com

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