

ULTIMATE PEBBLE BEACH

Where to Dine

The Monterey Peninsula dishes out a wide variety of culinary experiences, from gourmet to drive-thru. However, to properly celebrate your day at Pebble Beach, have a meal that pairs well with the golf. Here are three superb area restaurants up to the task.

The Bench Pebble Beach

» This refined but relaxed restaurant in The Lodge at Pebble Beach overlooks one of the greatest finishing holes in golf, yet it opens with great starters on its menu, including Asian-style steamed pork buns. What follows isn't shabby either, whether it's the pan-seared salmon with cranberry beans, or the wood-grilled chicken with butternut squash and pecan sauce. Grab a seat at sunset. It's a feast for the eyes and a whole lot more. (pebblebeach.com/dining/the-bench)



With its panoramic Pacific views, The Bench could be called The Beach.

At the beautiful L'Escargot, you hope that dinner is served at a snail's pace.



Aubergine Carmel

» You're apt to find oysters and abalone if you follow your wild tee shot into Monterey Bay. You'll also come across them on the \$150 prix-fixe menu at this smart, seasonally inspired restaurant, which draws on local bounty to produce such dishes as crab with green strawberries and mussel "frost," and milk-fed pork with carrots and honey. The

Without a doubt, the culinary whizzes at Aubergine have chops.



atmosphere is posh but unpretentious, and the cooking is as sharp as you'd like your game to be. (auberginecarmel.com)

L'Escargot Carmel

» Although the French have yet to produce a major champion in golf, they have given the world plenty of culinary classics. Take frog legs Provençal, or veal medallions with wild mushrooms, or cassoulet, a satisfying medley of pork sausage, duck confit and white beans that's the perfect belly-warmer when fog blankets the coast. Those and other smartly constructed dishes make up the menu at this graceful bistro, which gives you the option of a prix-fixe dinner or Gallic staples offered à la carte. (lescargot-carmel.com) —Josh Sens