

TRAVEL TOP 10 GOLD COAST COURSES + DENARAU + CARMEL + ARGENTINA

THE CUT

GOLF LEISURE

THE
**ULTIMATE
DRIVING
MACHINE**
Sergio Garcia



PRACTICE RANGE
+ JASON DAY + RICKIE FOWLER + LEXI THOMPSON

PRO SHOP
+ BUILD YOUR OWN BAG + GOLF CARTS

HSBC 
Premier

A person is walking away from the camera on a lush green golf course. In the background, there is a white clubhouse with a large arched window, surrounded by tall trees. The sky is overcast and grey.

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GOLF
TRAVELLER

ON COURSE FOR CARMEL

RENOWNED FOR ITS BEAUTY AND SOPHISTICATED YET QUIRKY CHARM, CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA IS THE IDEAL JUMPING-OFF POINT FOR PEBBLE BEACH, SPYGLASS HILL AND THE OTHER GREAT GOLF COURSES ON CALIFORNIA'S MONTEREY PENINSULA.

WORDS Brian Kendall

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



Pebble Beach Golf Course



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, a bucket-list course for every golfer, charges a green fee of US\$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 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 River. 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.

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 92-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 fairytale cottages built by local architect Hugh Comstock starting in the 1920s. Eastwood, who was elected mayor 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 clifftop across the bay are the emerald fairways of Pebble Beach, for golfers the most alluring of all the wonders on the Monterey Peninsula. ■

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Pebble Beach Golf Course

BELOW: The Links at Spanish Bay. BOTTOM: Spyglass Hill Golf Course.

BELOW: Poppy Hills Golf Club. BOTTOM: Quail Lodge Golf Course.



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