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BEST-VALUE DESTINATION
Murcia

BEST RESORT
La Manga Club

Why they won: Boasting a wide array of courses including flagship resort La Manga Club, Murcia is Spain's up-and-coming sunshine golf destination. There are 22 courses within a 35km radius, offering some of the best-value green fees on the Med. You can enjoy more than 300 holes, including a selection of layouts created by some of golf's

biggest names such as Seve Ballesteros, José María Olazabal, and Jack Nicklaus (the region's Nicklaus Golf Trail features six varied 18-hole courses in Mar Menor, La Torre, El Valle, Alhama, Saurines and Riquelme).

Hacienda Del Alamo has become popular since opening 10 years ago, but Murcia's top dog is La Manga Club, with three 18-hole layouts (South, North & West) and a new Leadbetter Golf Academy – the only one in mainland Spain.

Set in 1,400 acres, the resort boasts a 28-court tennis centre, a 2,000m² spa and fitness centre plus the choice of a five-star hotel, four-star serviced apartments and townhouses and more than 20 bars and restaurants. It's won Spain's Best Hotel/Resort award five years running!

Do it yourself: Three nights and three rounds at Hotel Principe Felipe from €415pp (five nights, four green fees from €635pp, seven nights, five green fees from €850pp) based on two sharing a double/twin. Exclusive offer for TG readers: Free upgrade when booked before Mar 1, subject to availability. Quote TGJAN16. Contact: 0034 968 175577, www.lamangaclub.com

BEST COURSE
PGA Catalunya

Why it won: It's home of the magnificent Stadium course, a regular European Tour

and Q School venue. It has replaced Valderrama as Spain's No.1 with former Ryder Cup captain Jose Maria Olazabal claiming: "It is one of the best courses in the world. It is very well composed and there is a lot of risk and reward." It's a great all-round test, with lakes in play on seven holes, and is always in immaculate condition – as is the neighbouring relatively easier Tour layout.

Do it yourself: Overnight B&B stay (based on two sharing a standard double room) and Tour Course green fee costs €165 per person from June 1-30 (Stadium Course supplement of €10). Plus, exclusively for TG readers, daily complimentary range balls (bucket of 50 balls) and daily manual trolley. To book call 0034 972 472577 or e-mail reserves@pgacatalunya.com



Top prize
PGA Catalunya was a strong Ryder Cup 2022 candidate.



Star quality
Arnold Palmer has advised on the South course at La Manga.

BEST RESORT (NORTH)
Slaley Hall

Why it won: It has two superb, contrasting courses (Hunting and Priestman) plus a luxury Edwardian mansion hotel, all plotted within 1,000 acres of moorland and forest. The accommodation and facilities are top drawer while both 18-hole courses have seen European Tour action over the years.
Do it yourself: Sunday driver package includes dinner, B&B accommodation and 36 holes of golf, from £89pp. To book call 0845 241 9785.

BEST COURSE (NORTH)
Royal Lytham & St Annes

Why it won: Fellow Open venue Royal Birkdale has previously dominated this category, but Royal Lytham has now turned the tables. It's not a beautiful links with awesome sea views, but it is one of the most challenging and demanding (as Adam Scott found to his cost in the 2012 Open). You have to plot your way past 200-plus bunkers of the most penal kind.
Do it yourself: One night's B&B stay in the dromy house at Royal Lytham, one round at Royal Lytham and one at St. Annie's Old Links costs from \$242 per person (Mon-Fri). Valid until the end of Sept. To book call 01704 807800.

BEST RESORT (SOUTH)
The Grove

Why it won: Ten years after Tiger won a WGC event here, London's so-called country club

stages the British Masters in October. Conveniently close to the M25, the five-star luxury hotel is supported by a spa and fine dining. The Kyle Phillips-designed course is in great condition year-round with the greens arguably among the best around.
Do it yourself: TG readers can book 18 holes of golf at The Grove for £80 (weekdays and weekends) until the end of February 2016. Call 01923 294266 or email tee.time@thegrove.co.uk, ref TGGROVE.

BEST COURSE (SOUTH)
Sunningdale Old

Why it won: Along with the equally stunning New, the mystical Old guarantees a perfect day out. It's a classic heathland layout framed by Scots pines and swathes of heather and gorse. Inland courses don't come any more scenic than this magical beauty, which replaces its near neighbour Wentworth's West course as southern England's No.1.
Do it yourself: You can play for £125 until Mar 31 – nearly half the normal green fee rate! To book call 01344 621681.

BEST RESORT (WEST)
Bovey Castle

Why it won: It guarantees the ultimate great escape on the edge of Dartmoor National Park, with a gorgeous manor house hotel and a quirky course set out on hillsides and a valley bottom. Visitors can also stay in 22 three-storey country lodges within Bovey's exquisite grounds.
Do it yourself: Two nights' B&B (for two sharing a Classic room) and two rounds costs

from £598 for two people. To book call 01647 445007.

BEST COURSE (WEST)
St Mellion (Nicklaus)

Why it won: It's one of the most challenging and beautiful inland courses in the land. It was Jack Nicklaus' first UK course project and the 18-times Major champion is justifiably proud of his work. It has staged six Benson & Hedges International Opens and you can even tackle it for half-price thanks to 2-FORE-1.
Do it yourself: Exclusive TG stay & play offer: book a one or two-night golf break (package inclusive of dinner, B&B) and receive a complimentary lunch as part of your stay. To book call 01579 352001 and quote TG/STM2016.

BEST RESORT & COURSE EAST AND MIDLANDS
The Belfry

Why it won: Another double triumph for the venue, which has staged a record-breaking four Ryder Cups. And The Belfry is now even more appealing after its £26m off-course refurbishment. Golfers love the challenge of the Brabazon course, the scene of so much Ryder Cup drama. The ultimate test of parkland golf is always in immaculate condition and is ably supported by the neighbouring PGA National and Derby, plus superb practice and custom-fitting facilities.
Do it yourself: Two nights' B&B (in a Signature double or twin room) and a round on all three courses, costs from £229pp. To book call 0844 980 0600 or visit www.TheBelfry.com for more information. ☑



Costa Cálida
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Royal approval
The iconic green and white hues of Lytham's clubhouse.



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