

# FRONT 9 TRAVEL

Bespoke Luxury Golf Experiences

ISSUE FIVE SUMMER 2022

## Portugal's Algarve, never disappoints!

### **Including:**

Algarve Golf Road Trip  
Magical Island of Mauritius  
South Africa Escorted Golf Tour  
Golf Coaching Trip with Paul Babbage

Inspiration from great golf destinations and travel writers



For more information and prices please contact [info@front9travel.com](mailto:info@front9travel.com) or call on 01342 653093

## EDITORS LETTER SUMMER 2022

Some travel destinations are so well known that they can seem at times rather “run of the mill”, resorts and luxury hotels visited time and time again, without thought of the real essence of a country. Think again, as in this edition of the magazine, we invite you to look with fresh eyes at some of the better-known golfing destinations. Let’s take Portugal for example, a crazy fact is that Portugal has a lot of sea territory – 18 times that of its land mass in fact - and with that amount of water comes a lot of fish and a gastronomic heritage, that sees fish as the pivotal ingredient. The Portuguese are the third highest consumer of fish on the planet after Iceland and Japan, and because of that, the average life expectancy is pretty high! In our road trip around the Algarve, read about an array of hotels, from quaint boutique to super modern, and golf courses in stunning natural landscapes that reflect and entice you to experience the real lesser-known Portugal.

Enjoy reading about our curated South African Escorted Tour, where our knowledgeable guide takes the visitor beyond the expected golf experience, from safari to wine tasting to sightseeing, he can show you a different South Africa. Or, visit the magical island of Mauritius the only known home of the now extinct dodo. Colonised first by Portugal, then the Dutch, French and then the British, the island has rich mixed cultural heritage reflected in its gastronomy and architecture.

Finally, back to golf! Autumn might seem a long way off but planning now for those dark short golf deprived days is a must and we can offer just the thing with a Golf Coaching Trips to a whole range of sunlight filled winter destinations, so read about the experiences of our golf coaching trips and get on and plan yours!

Above Image:  
Abama Golf Course, Tenerife

Front Cover image:  
Palmares Golf Course

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# Portugal's Algarve, never disappoints!

Written by Natalie Scott





**A Golf Road trip? That is what I did to rediscover the well-known gems of Portugal's Algarve, and got to know the lesser known but upcoming new comers on the block.**

I travelled west to east from the rugged cliff-strewn city of Lagos with one of Portugal's most striking natural attractions, the Ponta da Piedade a group of dramatic yellow golden rock formations which soar 20 meters high dominating the Atlantic coastline, passing central Algarve with its plethora of Michelin star restaurants and innovative wineries, to the eastern resort of Monte Rei close to the Spanish border and the heart of the historic Eastern Algarve, with its Roman architecture, scenic fishing ports and a deep classic Portuguese gastronomic heritage.

My route offers no less than 13 golf courses all with something different to offer and an impressive number of 5-star luxury hotels from striking modern resort hotels to small quirky boutique guest houses. We can curate for you a holiday of fabulous golf, memorable living and dining, and don't forget the wine tour experiences at the impressive wineries located along Algarve. Considering Portugal for an autumn/winter or pre-season preparation in the Spring? I concluded my 'road trip' with a PGA coaching course at Monte Rei, where Paul Stuart head professional at the London Golf Club was running one of our Front 9 Travel coaching trip for a small group for intensive personal coaching and some fun.



I based the first part of my trip around three golf courses, all within 10 to 15 minutes from the town of Lagos. Firstly, Boa Vista, located high on the cliffs with its far-reaching views of the Bay of Lagos to the east and the Monchique mountains to the north. The golf course uses the natural contours of the terrain and as a result it presents plenty of challenge especially on holes six and eight where you have to hit your ball across a ravine! Secondly, Espiche Golf, located in a nature reserve is an eco-resort which has been perfectly integrated into the surrounding natural environment. Preservation, conservation and innovation of resource management are at the heart of this golf club. The course was designed to integrate effortlessly into the surrounding countryside and the indigenous flora and fauna of the area have been preserved. Long and challenging for all level of golfer where straightness and accuracy are essential for a low score. And, finally Palmares GC which originally opened in 1975 and then Robert Trent Jones II, worked his magic and it re-opened in 2011 with 27 holes, this wonderful course has three nine-hole loops "Alvor", "Lagos" and "Praia" each have their own special characteristics with stunning country, river and ocean views and links-style winding through the dunes along the Atlantic coast and with the remaining laid out over gently undulating fairways. Rated 26th in the Top 100 Golf Courses in Europe.



With these three courses in mind, I started my tour with a stay at **Cascades Wellness Resort (1)**, a 10-minute drive to the restaurants and historic sites of the centre of the historic town of Lagos. This 5-star resort has 105 rooms and suites, decorated in five different styles from Asia to Portugal and 58 apartments, which are more like mini villas. Rooms are large and comfortable but I suggest a room with the dramatic sea views is definitely worth the extra cost. I loved the coastal path walks that run from the hotel toward the Ponta da Piedade lighthouse and the panoramic view of the 5km white sandy beach of Meia Praia that runs all the way from the Alvor estuary to Lagos.





For those wanting walkable restaurant, bars and shops, and the historic flavour of Lagos, consider the 4-star hotel **Tivoli Lagos (7)**, a short walk from Lagos's old town, with its winding pebble streets peppered with coffee shops and al fresco restaurants. The hotel has a seasonal free shuttle bus to the white sands of Meia Praia Beach which is 10 minutes away, and is about the same distance to get to my suggested golf courses. The inside of the property is the work of famous Portuguese interior designer Maria Jose Salavisa. White-and-blue walkways run through the hotel, and cosy touches like reading nooks keep things homely. Outside, you'll find lots of courtyard gardens dotted around. I recommend a newly refurbished superior room is the best option.

If you are looking for a smaller boutique feel to your accommodation and Michelin star dining experience then consider the **Palmares Beach House (3)**, part of the Palmares Golf Resort. The feeling of a house by the sea integrated between the greens of the golf course and the blues of the majestic ocean, a 5-star boutique hotel with only 20 rooms. A short walk away is The Clubhouse, which provides the perfect to place for golfers to relax. With two restaurants to choose from, at the main restaurant you can enjoy local and international cuisine, it serves breakfast, lunch and early dinner. The Al Sud Michelin star restaurant offers modern, creative cuisine centred on three enticing menus that showcase the local area and its flavours. All the spacious rooms are decorated in soft pale colours that reflect the landscape and the balconies have amazing panoramic views of the golf course, Atlantic Ocean and the long beach of Meia Praia, which stretches from Ria de Alvor estuary to the historical walls of the city of Lagos. As soon as you walk into this small friendly hotel, you see the amazing views and you immediately feel relaxed.







Penina Hotel & Golf Resort

Leaving the area of Lagos, I drive east toward Portimao my destination en-route, **Penina Hotel & Golf Resort (4)**, the ancestral home of golf in the Algarve. Steeped in golf history the course was the first, and remains one of the best, to be built in the Algarve in 1966. The resort's 18-hole Championship Course, founded by John Stilwell and designed by golf architect Sir Henry Cotton, himself a championship golfer, has hosted the Portuguese Open on many occasions. The original 18-hole course now called the Championship course, is the gem of this resort but don't discount the 9-hole Resort and the par 3 Academy courses both giving a wide range of options to many different standards and mixed groups of golfers.

I hadn't visited the Penina hotel for many years but was pleased to see that it has retained its traditional Portuguese look and feel, a true gem of a hotel offering a 5-star experience to its many loyal clientele, many of whom have been visiting for years. The hotel has recently refurbished some rooms and bathrooms, and make sure you ask for a room with a pool or golf course view.

On my third day, I travelled a short distance from Penina toward Alvor, a beautiful and charming fishing town with strong Moorish historic roots and a medieval castle and churches. Traditional white washed houses and narrow streets house the best of Portuguese gastronomy, 'Ruccola' and 'O Arco da Velha' both well worth a visit but it is essential to pre-book. Alvor has some of the most ravishing beaches in the world, large stretches of uninterrupted pristine sand, golden dunes and crystal-clear waters.

Alvor is the home to four 'Pestana Hotels' an award-winning Portuguese owned luxury hotel brand whose ethos is to be the guardians of Portuguese culture and heritage. In the area of Alvor are; **Alvor Praia, Blue Alvor, Alvor South Beach(5)** and **Dom Joao II (5)**. Offering a range of location, luxury and price.



Pensana Alvor Praia Pool

The 5-star **Alvor Praia(5)** and 4-star **Dom Joao II(5)** are the favourite with golfers, both on the beach offering rooms with sea views and within walking distance to restaurants in the town. The **Alvor Blue(5)** is the first all-inclusive hotel built for families in the Algarve. It's set back from the beach in its own gardens. The low-rise Art Deco **Alvor South Beach (5)** is an 89-room boutique hotel which has been designed to mimic Miami's real South Beach, it has direct access to Tres Irmao Beach and a 10-minute walk away from Alvor village with its many local restaurants.

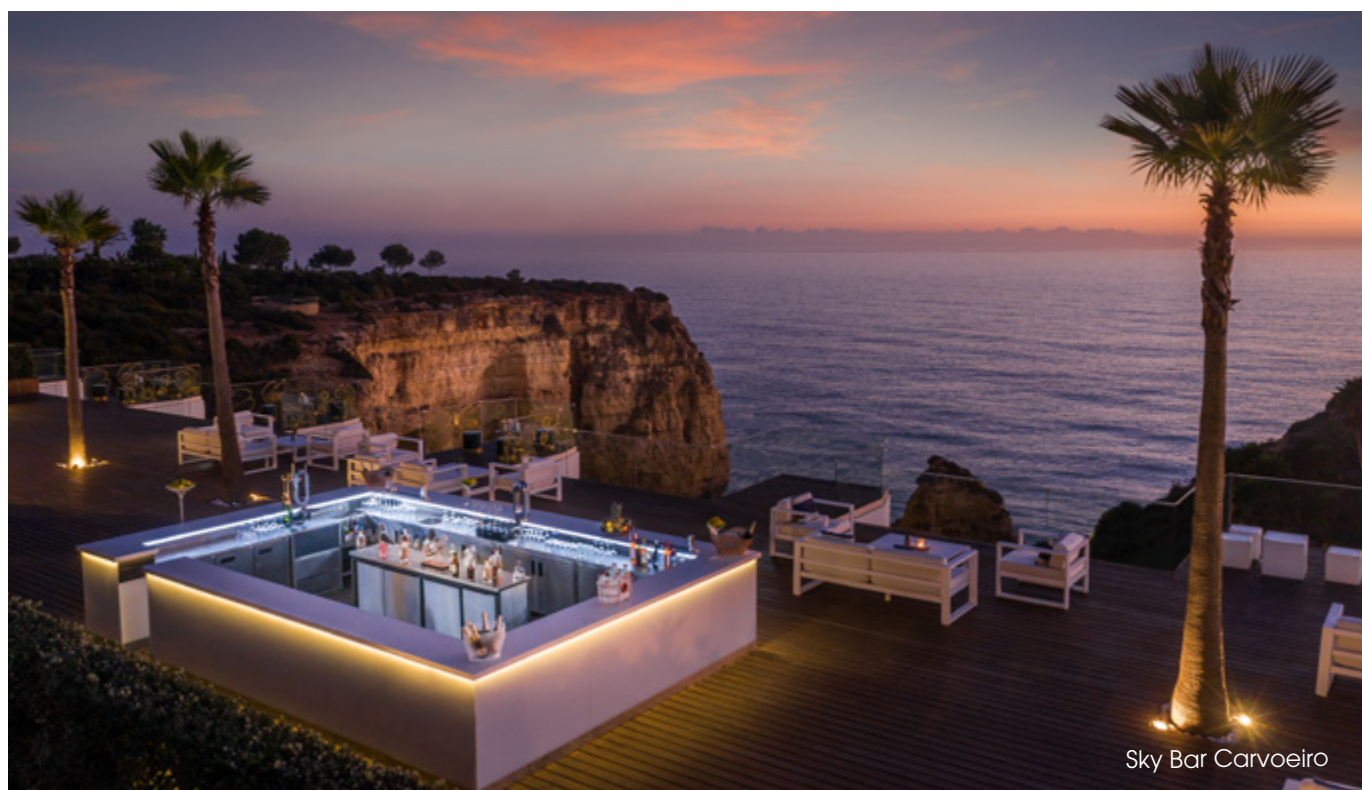
If you choose to stay at any of these hotels then a plethora of golf is available as you will have access to the Pestana golf courses; **Quinta do Gramacho, Vale da Pinta(6)**, Silves and Alto Golf. If you are looking for a hotel on the golf course and are perhaps a golf group then consider the **Pestana Gramacho apartments and studios(6)**, perhaps not so luxurious but practical and functional with immediate on-site access to two golf clubs.



Pestana Dom Joao II



Continuing east a short drive away is the recently refurbished 5-star **Tivoli Carvoeiro (7)**. Perched dramatically on the golden cliffs of the Vale Covo and with far reaching views of the Atlantic Ocean. After a comprehensive 5-month remodelling project, this hotel promises to set a new standard for luxury amongst Algarve resorts, with 248 stunningly refurbished bedrooms, suites with balconies and new Family Rooms for larger groups. From the moment I walked in I loved the ambience, peaceful colour tones, and views over the iconic golden cliffs of the Algarve to the Atlantic. Rooms offer a range of views but I would definitely pay the extra to have a sea view room. Gastronomy is high on the agenda and a diversity of dining experiences is available at six restaurants and bars. Take an inspiring journey through International Cuisine at Med Food & Wine, or savour the sophisticated side of Portuguese gastronomy at The One Restaurant. Mare Bistro keeps guests satisfied with light, delicious bites and the freshest catches of the day, all with stunning sea front and cliff views. I had a wonderful meal at The One Restaurant of Portuguese inspired modernist Asian infused dishes paired with perfect local Algarve wines.





On day four, my route takes me still East but slightly inland to the quaint hilltop village of Alcantarilha and the **Amendoeira Golf Resort (8)**. As I drive in and up to the resort, set as it is on an elevated position in an area of outstanding natural beauty, I am immediately struck by the vastness of the buildings and blush pink Moorish architecture, with elegant arches and shady terraces, set against a backdrop of the lush valleys of almond, olive and carob trees and the Monchique mountains beyond.

The Clubhouse is the hub of the resort where the pro shop, restaurants and bar are located, the terrace has wonderful views across the two golf courses. There is a resort shuttle bus that will pick up and take you to anywhere on the resort. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are served at the clubhouse. Accommodation is in a choice of functional one- and two-bedroom apartments and villas.

With two award-winning 18-hole courses; Faldo and O'Connor Jnr, Golf Academy with great practice facilities, plus the only 9-hole floodlit course in Portugal, your golf will always be challenged. If you are a group of golfers and look to stay in the complex, the resort can arrange a fun evening with a BBQ at the floodlit course, which has its own club house. All green fees on the 18-hole courses include a shared buggy, which is a must as the courses cover a vast area.



From Alcantarilha I drive back toward the coast to the luxury marina resort of Vilamoura and the **Anantara Vilamoura Resort Hotel (9)**, the only offering in Portugal from the high-end contemporary hotel group Anantara Group who put sustainability at the core of their ethos. This 5-star hotel has golf as a fundamental and as such overlooks the **'Victoria' course (9)**, hailed as the most ambitious golf project Portugal had ever witnessed and designed by true golfing legend, Arnold Palmer. Now considered one of the best golf courses in Portugal, one of the most challenging in Europe, which has made it the obvious venue of choice for many of the top international tournaments and the host venue to the Portugal Masters on every occasion since 2007. Just 10 minutes' drive from Vilamoura Marina with its luxury yachts and nightlife, the hotel offers, tranquillity and a high-quality dining experience. The signature restaurant EMO, (which has been recognised for three consecutive years as the 'Wine Spectator Best of Awards of Excellence') is quite unique in putting the discovery of its extensive wine cellar, which boasts 350 expertly selected wines, as the driver in its menu creation. Selected wines are accompanied by local Portuguese cuisine, with dishes specially created to complement each distinct glass. Bespoke offerings from Dine by Design, tailored private dining options, to the Spice Spoons cooking classes, a Portuguese Cooking experience, give a range of quality dining experiences.



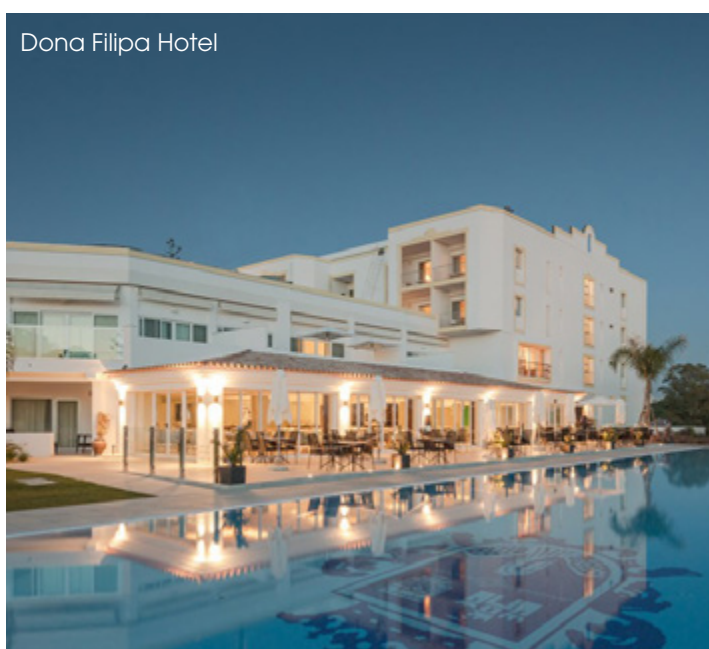
The 5-star **Tivoli Marina Hotel (10)**, from the same stable as the Tivoli Carvoeiro, is similarly contemporary and airy. Your choice of type of room is less important here than its view and almost all rooms have either an ocean or marina view. Refurbishment of rooms is ongoing so make sure you request a newly refurbished option.

It is often a criticism of Vilamoura Marina that it's luxury has removed its Portuguese grit and earthiness and that one could be at any anonymous luxury marina, don't believe a word of it! There are hidden gems around every corner and I was lucky enough to eat at the 'Universal Restaurante', a traditional Portuguese restaurant, just a short hop from the main marina area.

I then headed to **Quinta do Lago (15)** to see the recently reopened South Course, and have lunch at the Clubhouse, which all lived up to expectations. Quinta do Lago has three 18-hole championship courses; North, South and Laranjal, all worth including in your itinerary. The resort now offers accommodation ranging from luxury villas to the quirky boutique, **Magnolia Hotel (12)**, which brings a taste of retro Palm Springs to the Algarve!



And so, to grand old dame of the Algarve the 5-star **Dona Filipa Hotel** in Vale do Lobo. Right on the beach front and newly refurbished, the hotel blends modern design with classic Portuguese style. Golfers can choose to play a wide array of golf courses including the hotels world famous, San Lorenzo and Pinheiros Altos, as well as the other courses in the area; Vale do Lobo and Quinta do Lago courses. Just short walk away is Praca which has numerous restaurants from Italian to Mexican and bars and clubs.



I then continued my journey east, passed Faro, to the relatively undiscovered area of the Eastern Algarve, I hadn't been to this area for more than 20 years and despite some significant development it has retained its Portuguese charm with a more rustic and earthier ambience than its western neighbour. Six 18-hole golf courses, which include the number one course in Portugal, **Monte Rei (14)**, make for an impressive golf experience for the visitor, with all six courses within 20-30-minute drive of each other and the array of hotels available. Amongst this choice of magnificent courses, a special mention needs to be made of **Quinta do Vale (17)**, a Seve Ballesteros designed course

overlooking the river border between Portugal and Spain, **Quinta da Ria** and **Quinta da Cima (16)**, all excellent resort courses, reminiscent of the parkland course of Florida, with lush green fairways, flat lies, large bunkers, and fast greens all kept in excellent conditions and with impressive views of the Atlantic Ocean in the distance.



Praia Verde Boutique Hotel

I stayed at the 65 room, **Praia Verde Boutique Hotel (13)**, Portuguese architecture seems to favour the contemporary but this hotel is an impressive move toward the modern with a steel structure clad in slate rising in a quarter circle from lush pine forest. Surrounded by the white sand beach, salt pans in neighbouring Castro Marim, small coves and close to the Guadiana River which delineates Portugal from Spain. The location of the hotel is quite spectacular. An interesting fact - did you know that the proximity to the Mediterranean here means the Atlantic is considerably warmer than the western Algarve?

The interior of the hotel is equally cool, both in vibe and ambiance but somehow mixed with Portuguese warmth. The hotel lobby doubles as an open market with local produce set out to entice. The restaurant takes up most of the ground floor and has a window into the kitchens, where you can see the Chef preparing the food. They are very proud of the food they service here, wherever possible, all locally sourced. Being close to the coastline, I decided to go with seafood, squid starter followed by tuna, with a very unusual dessert, my host had the lamb cutlets, the whole experience was extremely enjoyable. Someone described the venue as a restaurant with rooms and I would add with well-designed and decorated rooms.



Monte Rei Resort

From here I moved to the impeccable 5-star **Monte Rei Resort**, a new concept in the Algarve offering a selection of luxury residences inspired by the lifestyle of the modern consumer. It offers the discerning traveller and golf enthusiast the ultimate comfort and convenience. I stayed in their new Clubhouse Residences, cool and sleek, these luxurious and spacious two and three bedroom apartments are all that is good about modern Portuguese architecture, with white open spaces with a bright airy feel. All open to views of their own heated swimming pool and 18th hole beyond.



Quinta da Ria Golf Course



At the time of my visit, Paul Stuart, Head Professional at the London Golf Club, was hosting a **Front 9 Travel Coaching Trip**. Our group stayed in the hotels linked three-bedroom villas with all the comfort and charm of a private home, individual bedrooms, en-suite bathrooms, all elegantly furnished and surrounded by extensive manicured gardens, generous terraces and private outdoor dining area.

Breakfast and lunch were serviced at the Grill Restaurant at Club House and our pre-arranged dinners at Veranda Restaurant, which is located close to the villas, here you will also find another swimming pool, tennis courts, gym, steam room, sauna and massage room. The resort has a shuttle bus to take you around the resort, it was very reliable and prompt. The service across the whole resort was second to none, friendly professional and welcoming.

I can see why Monte Rei is the No.1 course in Portugal, situated as it is in the quiet countryside the condition is immaculate, the design challenging and the local bird life interesting, and noisy, were they laughing at my golf!!! Each hole is carved expertly through the terrain, with wide fairways from the tee that narrow wickedly as you approach the bunker guarded greens. Thankfully, buggies with GPS are provided, an essential for this challenging course.



Paul's coaching trip was a huge success with our clients who not only improved their golf skills through on course coaching and use of the impressive driving range, but made new friendships with like-minded golf mad people. The putting techniques and drills he used have really helped my game!! I would highly recommend a coaching trip during our autumn/winter; it is a great way to have something to focus on prior to the golf season.

Hopefully you have enjoyed reading my journey across the Algarve, if you are interested in any of the above resorts, please contact us and we will be happy to discuss your next trip.



For more information and prices please contact [info@front9travel.com](mailto:info@front9travel.com) or call on 01342 653093



## RESORTS

- 1 Cascade Wellness Resort
- 5 Pestana Alvor Praia
- 5 Pestana Alvor Blue
- 6 Pestana Gramacho Residences
- 7 Tivol Carvoeiro
- 8 Amendoeira Golf Resort
- 9 Anantara Vilamoura Algarve Resort
- 14 Monte Rei Resort

## ESTABLISHED FAVOURITES

- 2 Tivoli Lagos
- 4 Penina Hotel & Golf Resort
- 5 Pestana Dom Joao II
- 10 Tivoli Vilamoura Marina
- 11 Hotel Dona Filipa



Pestana Alvor South Beach



### BOUTIQUE PROPERTIES

- 3 Palmares Beach House
- 5 Pestana Alvor South Beach
- 12 Magnolia Hotel
- 13 Praia Verde Boutique Hotel

### GOLF COURSES

- 3 Palmares
- 4 Penina
- 6 Quinta do Gramacho & Vale da Pinta
- 8 Amendoeira - Faldo & O'Connor
- 9 Dom Pedro Victoria
- 14 Monte Rei
- 15 Quinta do Lago - South & North
- 16 Quinta da Cima & Quinta da Ria
- 17 Quinta do Vale



Quinta da Rai Fairway



# South Africa 10 day Escorted Golf Tour

## Cape Town, the Winelands and the Garden Route

The world's a big place, and leisure time precious, so there are times when you might want to see and do a little more, to get every last ounce out of your experiences. An escorted tour allows you to really get under the skin of a destination without worrying about the detail. Surround yourself with people with similar passions and with the comfort that your itinerary is focused on exactly what you want to do or see and how you want to do it. Safari, golf, history and cultural, adventure, gastronomy and wine, an escorted tailored tour, with a knowledgeable professional, can deliver all of this and more.

Front 9 Travel's unique and bespoke 'Golf Safari Tour' in South Africa's south western region, led by our experienced tour guide Simon Lacey, whom with his 20 years specialist knowledge of South African culture and history, and of course the magnificent golf courses, will take you from historic Cape Town east to the vine-covered valleys of the winelands renowned for all things food and drink. Then back to the southeastern coast to meander along the verdant and ecologically diverse 190-mile stretch known as the Garden Route.

You'll be met on arrival into Cape Town and introduced to your fellow golfers at a Welcome Dinner in the famous V&A Waterfront. Your tour starts the following morning and will take you through some of the most stunning scenery in the Cape. You will play superb and challenging golf course, with a friendly level of competition to spice up your days, and enjoy some of the finest South African cuisine and wines from the regions you visit. And, if this isn't enough finish your tour with a safari at the luxury Gondwana Game Reserve.



Peal Valley Golf Course



## Itinerary Summary

- Centrally located hotel in Cape Town's V&A Waterfront (Victoria & Alfred)
- Two superb golf resort hotels (Erinvale & Fancourt)
- Great range of golf courses (with options for more golf if required)
- Good balance between excursions (including lunch) and golf
- Options to play two additional top class courses (Pearl Valley & The Links)
- Welcome dinner and farewell dinner with golf prizes
- Optional safari extension at the end of the tour

## Detailed Itinerary - 23 Oct - 2 Nov 2022

**Days 1 to 3** – 3 nights at Victoria & Alfred Hotel in a Piazza Facing room including breakfast

Day 1 – Meet & Greet on arrival at Cape Town Airport and transfer to hotel, includes welcome dinner at Ginja Restaurant

Day 2 – Full day guided Cape Peninsula Tour includes entrance fees to Cape Point, Boulders Beach & Chapman's Peak including lunch at Two Oceans Restaurant or optional golf

Day 3 – return transfer to/from Milnerton Golf Course – play 18 holes



Victoria & Albert Hotel, Cape Town



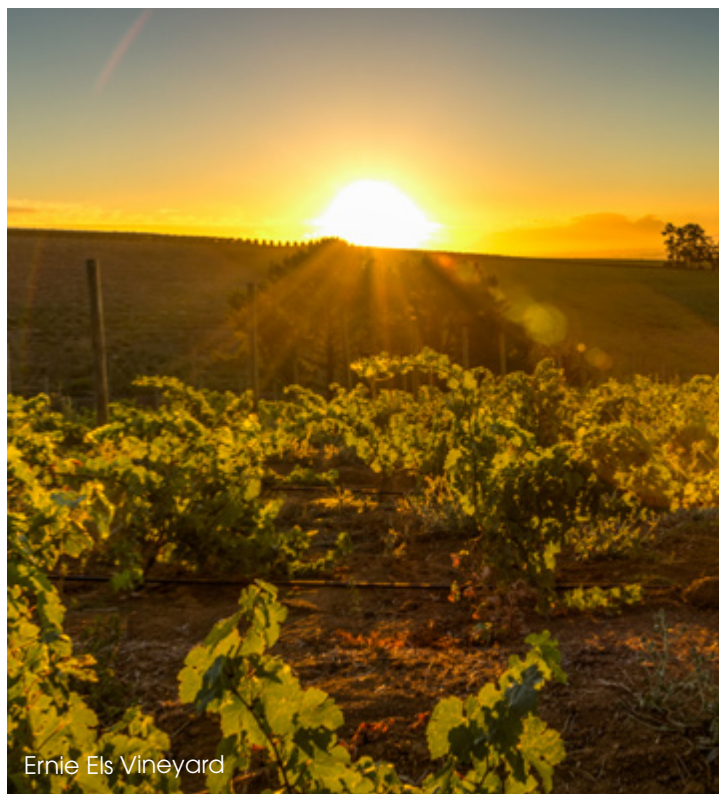
Penguins at Boulders Beach

**Days 4 to 6** – 3 nights at Erinvale Estate Hotel & Spa in a run of house room (Courtyard Luxury or Courtyard Terrace) including breakfast

Day 4 – return transfers to/from Erinvale GC - play 18 holes. Transfer to Erinvale Hotel after golf

Day 5 – return transfer to/from De Zalze Golf Estate – play 18 holes, then a visit to Ernie Els Winery after golf

Day 6 – full day guided winelands tour includes 2 x wine tastings and entrance fee and tour of Dylan Lewis Sculpture Garden or optional golf at Pearl Valley



Ernie Els Winery



**Days 7 to 11** – 4 nights at Fancourt Hotel in a Classic room including breakfast

Day 7 – Transfer to Fancourt Hotel, via Swellendam for a light lunch at La Belle Alliance Cafe

Day 8 – Play 18 holes at Montagu Golf Course at Fancourt

Day 9 – Return golf transfers to/from Pinnacle Point Golf Estate – play 18 holes, includes shared golf cart

Day 10 – Play 18 holes on Outeniqua Golf Course or optional round on Fancourt The Links. Farewell dinner at La Cantina/Monet's

Day 11 – Transfer to George Airport





The itinerary includes transfers with a driver, water on transfers, portorage at airport and hotel, and golf prizes. Includes meals as stated in detailed itinerary, excludes drinks. Itinerary subject to slight changes based on 10+ people travelling. Flights are not included; please request a price at time of enquiry.

## Optional 2 Night Safari Extension at Gondwana

### Days 1 to 3

Day 1 Transfer from Fancourt Hotel to Gondwana

2 nights at Gondwana Game Reserve in a Kwena Lodge Room, includes three meals and game activities, excludes drinks

Day 3 Transfer to George Airport



Giraffe being viewed on a Game Drive at Gondwana

For more info and availability please contact [info@front9travel.com](mailto:info@front9travel.com) or call on 01342 653093

# Algarve Coaching Trip with Paul Babbage

PGA Head Professional at Farleigh Golf Club  
12 October 2022  
Luxury Training Programme



The harder I practice the luckier I get!' A great quote attributed at times to both golfing greats Arnold Palmer and Gary Player...in fact it doesn't belong to either of them and more likely the philosopher Confucius..... however, the point is that it's a brilliant mindset for making improvements in your golf performance and what better way to do this than by travelling to Portugal and staying at one of the Algarve's most famous golf resorts, Penina Hotel & Golf Resort, to fine tune your swing with an experienced PGA Professional.

The Algarve is Europe's number one golf destination and Penina offers excellent practice facilities along with an 18-hole Championship course and a 9-hole course to test your skills and what better way to experience this destination, than with a with **PGA Head Professional, Paul Babbage**, from Farleigh Golf Club, part of The Foxhills Collection.



This 5-star resort is located between Alvor and Lagos and is the glittering jewel in the Algarve's crown. The resort is located in stunning grounds and offers guest the choice between the 9-hole Resort course and the Championship Course, which hosted the Portuguese Open nine times. It is still one of the most iconic resorts offering Portuguese charm and exceptional golf. With various dining and bar options available, including Sagres Restaurant for buffet breakfast and dinner, Le Grill for fine dining and L'Arlecchino if you fancy Italian food. For those looking for a light meal or snacks at The Sir Henry Cotton Club is perfect. Leisure facilities include a large outdoor pool, floodlit tennis courts and a gym with sauna and treatment rooms.

## Golf Courses

**Championship Course** – the oldest 18-hole course in the Algarve's, designed by Sir Henry Cotton and completed in 1966. This Par 73 course, is flanked by streams, water hazards and precarious ditches, the course boasts an array of subtle slopes and raised greens, which can catch out even the most careful golfer.

**Resort Course** – 9 holes - also designed by Sir Henry Cotton, is the perfect course for golfers of every level and ability. It provides solid, but gentle, practice for beginners, but at the same time playing 18 holes can challenge the more seasoned players.



## Package Includes:

- 4 nights accommodation with daily breakfast
- Welcome drink and in room VIP treatment
- 3 lunches on coaching days
- 2 dinners (welcome & farewell)
- 3 hours coaching with unlimited balls for 3 days
- 3 rounds of golf

### **Mountain View Prices;**

Sharing a twin room - £685 per person

Single room - £849 per person



### **Pool View Prices;**

Sharing a twin room - £775 per person

Single room - £999 per person



**Based on a minimum of 7 amateurs travelling with the Golf Professional.**

**Flights and airport transfers not included.**

For more information and prices please contact [info@front9travel.com](mailto:info@front9travel.com) or call on 01342 653093



## **Paul Babbage**

Paul Babbage, Head PGA Professional at Farleigh GC, has 10+ years' experience of coaching in the UK and abroad, "The experience I have had with coaching all levels of amateur golfers has helped me to understand more, how to help players gain consistent improvement. Ever heard or said the phrase 'you need to take two steps back to go three forward', 'keep your head still', 'I want to be more consistent' - which all leads to frustration and poor performance". Paul has a programme to help golfers understand better their own swing, focus on what is actually important, practice what's right for them and so stop the frustration of 'Why am I not improving!'

### **Testimonial**

"Paul is the best ever! Combining fun, focus and flair. Paul has been a brilliant coach for us. He has guided us from absolute beginners to confident golfers. His true skill lies in his ability to identify one thing at a time to work on. His coaching is very clear, concise and is delivered in layman's terms. He brings the added dimension of the importance of mind set needed to mastering the game."

Sarah Riley (Hcp 36 - started as a complete beginner).



### **Leonardo Boutique Hotel Mallorca, Port Portals**

A 4-star superior boutique hotel, in a fabulous location, just 300m from the prestigious yachting and leisure development of Puerto Portals, in the heart of the Bay of Palma and ten minutes from Palma city itself. The contemporary design concept concurs with Majorcan influences, and is complemented by state-of-the-art technology and many sustainable features. Leonardo Hotels are known for their perfect locations and their Sky Bars, where in the summer time you can enjoy great vibes and the most impressive views, accompanied by drinks and music.



### **The Great House Antigua**

Located in the East of the island of Antigua, and situated on a 350-year-old former sugar estate, this property has been converted into a boutique private hotel catering for those who wish for privacy and peace amongst the sounds of the hummingbirds and sea breeze of the Caribbean. The Great House Antigua is one of a handful of original plantation houses open to guests. The features and furnishings throughout the Buff House have been restored to present an elegant and charming hotel.

# Golf and More - Boutique Properties

Our handpicked selection of boutique properties in Spain, England and the Caribbean, offer fabulous golf and unique accommodation.



### **True Blue Bay Boutique Resort, Grenada**

This is a family-owned and operated hotel. A charming eco-friendly boutique resort located on the south coast of the beautiful island of Grenada, where the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean merge. A five-minute drive can take you to popular restaurants, banks, shopping centres and several white sandy beaches including the infamous Grand Anse Beach. This boutique resort is one of the most affordable, friendly & relaxing places to stay when visiting the Spice Island in the Caribbean.



### **The Bell In, New Forest, UK**

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# Magical Island of Mauritius

Written by Rob Smith

Mark Twain is regularly misquoted as saying that “Golf is a good walk spoiled.” This was actually first said many years after his death, and for golfers is something of a heresy. What he certainly DID say is that “you gather the idea that Mauritius was created first, and then heaven; and that heaven was copied after Mauritius.” Regardless of your spiritual views, you cannot argue that this is a sumptuously gorgeous island. Even without the golf, and there are apparently some people for whom this wouldn’t be an issue, it has endless, eye-catching charm. If you then add in its lovely and varied courses, and you have one of golf’s most beautiful destinations.





Much of the golf is dotted along the dramatic and jagged 110-mile coastline, and on the east coast we first encounter the sporty 9-holer at the One&Only Saint Geran resort. Gary Player designed the layout 45 years ago in a plantation of almost 5,000 coconut palms, which divide the ocean and the lagoon. Tricky when the wind is up, it is a fun alternative or warmer-upper to the two superb Belle Mare Plage courses that are in close proximity, The Legend and The Links.

Each of its two neighbours have hosted the European Senior Tour, with the Legend designed 26 years ago by South African Hugh Baiocchi. The greens have since been rebuilt and are now first-class, and the course runs through an old deer reserve where they are still frequently seen. Water provides a constant challenge, no more so than at the signature 17th; a thrilling, short hole played across the lagoon to a very tricky green. The long par-4 closing hole snakes its way round to a peninsular green flanked on both sides by more water, right below the clubhouse. After the round, it is a treat to relax with a drink whilst watching others in the following groups face the same quandaries. The Links was designed by Peter Alliss and Rodney Wright and is slightly more open. Nonetheless, with a par of 71, it is a genuine and different experience in its own right, again with water an intimidating but photogenic distraction. To have the two courses together is a real bonus as they provide hugely entertaining and varied golf throughout. The Legend course has the fine hotel Constance Belle Mare Plage on site, with its sister hotel Constance Prince Maurice a short drive away from both courses.





Anahita Golf & Spa Resort

Just a few minutes down the road and you come to the most easterly point on the island which is home to two more very special courses. Their hotels are now working together to offer golfers a very tempting twosome which provide a real contrast in style despite being separated by just the Ile Aux Cerfs lagoon. Anahita was designed by 4-time Major champion, Ernie Els. The Big Easy has included some tough, deep bunkers and made use of a number of natural streams and ponds as well as an existing drystone wall. From the back tees it is a whopping 7,500 yards, but there are alternatives to cater for golfers with less superhuman powers. Anahita opened 12 years ago and boasts a glorious setting with the real highlight being the six holes that run along the palm-fringed shoreline. There is definitely something of a sting in the tail with the closing trio all very dramatic.

From parts of the course, it is possible to look over the water and see the amazing Ile Aux Cerfs course. This is one of the most photographed courses in the world and whilst there are others situated on islands, not too many have just the course and the clubhouse filling them completely and perfectly. Even the approach is special; a short gentle boat ride from the Shangri-La's Le Touessrok resort over the clear waters of the shallow lagoon. When Bernhard Langer designed this fantasy island course, he shunned the idea of relaxing, gentle holiday golf. It has since been softened a little in places but is still demanding, exhilarating and spectacular. On many shots there is the need to carry the ball over sea, swamp or lagoon, and it is kept in flawless condition with every hole separate, framed by trees, shrubs and water.



Just west of the southernmost tip of Mauritius comes the Heritage Golf Club in Club at Domaine de Bel Ombre. This has been built over more undulating ground with the course rising from just above the sea up towards the Black River Gorges National Park. There are superb views in every direction, including over the neighbouring Valriche Nature Reserve where you may catch glimpses of all manner of interesting wildlife, even flying foxes and the occasional mongoose. The design takes full advantage of the two rivers that run across the property and there are several lakes, which come into play offering plenty of risk and reward.



Lining Up A Putt at Ile Aux Cerfs

Nearby is the striking Mourn Mountain peninsular, that is home to the delightful and appropriately, named Paradis Golf Resort & Spa. The opening holes run behind the hotel and its equally appealing sister resort of Dinarobin. The course has been regularly tweaked and upgraded over the years, and you play through fragrant bougainvillea and poinsettia before you reach more open golfing terrain where water takes over, lakes and ditches, as well as the dreamy-looking lagoon that borders the superb long 16th. Both hotels offer spas, deep-sea fishing, and delicious, gourmet fine-dining as well as plenty of other holiday pursuits.

Tamarina is a little way up the west coast and a few miles south of the Mauritian capital of Port Louis. Opened in 2007, it is the island's first purpose-built residential golfing estate, and the par-72 course runs over undulating ground that resembles rugged African savannah. The fairways are framed by seas of native grasses, and there are superb views overlooking the blue waters of Tamarin Bay and up to Mount Rempart and the mountains beyond. The River Rempart runs down through the course, which again provides a quite different set of thrills and spills for the visiting golfer.

Two more fabulous developments have come into play since my last visit; the Avalon Golf Estate in the central highlands in 2015, and way up in the north, the newest addition, Mont Choisy. Mauritius and its golf can be summed up together very simply; beautiful, exotic, varied and full of charm - I clearly need to get back over there!





Ile Aux Cerfs Golf Course - 12th Green



Le Paradis Golf Resort

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# Contributors

Front 9 Travel would like to thank the following contributors:



Natalie Scott

Natalie has a wealth of expertise and knowledge of the global golf travel market, with over 27 years of experience of working closely with high quality 5 star resorts in some of the most prestigious locations in the world. Closer to home she is well respected by members of the professional golf community with strong connections to The PGA, and some of the most prestigious golf clubs in the UK, giving her a vast network of contacts and experiences. At Front 9 Travel, the philosophy is to offer an unrivalled, targeted, personal and professional service to clients looking for a truly 5 star golf experience, and Natalie has the knowledge and experience to build for clients a unique golf experience.



Simon Lacey

Simon provides expertise for golfers travelling to Africa but not just limited to golf, as his 20 years of experience includes in depth knowledge on safaris throughout Southern Africa and more general local travel. His passion for Africa dates back to 1997 when he first visited South Africa touring in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Africa got so deep under his skin in that one trip, that in June 2000 he bought the company that organised the holiday. Since then he has visited every country in Southern Africa (and a few in East Africa) – some like Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zambia on several occasions. In 2013 a golf tour operator bought out his company and he then added golf to his African repertoire. Since then he has played almost thirty of the top golf courses in South Africa from the Cape Provinces to KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga and has even popped over the border to Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) to play Royal Swazi.



Rob Smith

Rob is a Contributing Editor for Golf Monthly, who specialises in courses and golf travel. Within this issue of the magazine he describes one of his all-time favourite destinations, Costa Navarino in Greece.

Rob moved into the golf industry 20 years ago from a career in IT, in order to pursue his joint passions of golf and travel. He is a member at Tandridge in Surrey, and has now played more than 1,100 courses in nearly 50 countries.

In 2019, prior to Covid-19, he played more than 80 courses in England, Ireland and Wales, as well as in Spain, Germany, Bulgaria, the Dominican Republic, Vietnam... and the Isle of Wight! Although he helps to oversee the biennial Top 100 Course rankings for Golf Monthly magazine, his personal preference is for scenic beauty and setting, rather than the strategic design of a course. He would far rather play an average course in a stunning location, than a technically great course in an uninspiring setting.

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