

GOLF IN KENT

2021





Royal St George's

ROYAL ST GEORGE'S & THIS YEAR'S 149TH OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

It's the 10th July 2021, and as the eyes of the sporting world wake up and prepare to tune in for a spectacular week of golf, one prestigious course sitting atop Kent's iconic coastline in historic Sandwich is gearing up to host its biggest event since 2011. As The 149th Open Championship arrives in the Garden of England, we take a closer look at this year's host course and what it means to welcome one of the world's most renowned sporting events to Kent's shoreline.

Easily identifiable by the telling red cross of St George marked on each of the course's flags, and the thatched roof shelters scattered across its landscape, the course at Royal St George's flows effortlessly through the imposing high dunes of Sandwich Bay.

Stepping out onto the course, it's hard for golfers not to pause and enjoy the stunning views of the Channel seascape sweeping from Ramsgate in the north, across Pegwell Bay, and through to Deal in the South. This course is home to a huge variety of rare coastal dune-land flora and fauna, providing a unique, tranquil setting in which to enjoy a testing round of golf.

This beautiful links layout has long been ranked amongst the leading courses in the world, an accolade the on-site team won't take for granted, and perhaps unsurprisingly one of the main reasons golf's original championship has returned here no less than 15 times in its 149-

year history (more than any course outside of Scotland, might we add...)

It was back in 1885 that a man by the name of Dr William Laidlaw Purves was stood at the vantage point of St. Clement's Church in Sandwich, when he was intrigued by an expanse of undulating land along the nearby coastline. A Scot and a skilled golfer himself, William decided that this land was the perfect place to create a links golf course, and it was here that he designed and supervised the laying out of a course which he called St George's (after the English patron saint) when it opened two years later in 1887.

William's aim was that the course should be a rival to St Andrews in the South of England, and it was just seven years later, in 1894, that Royal St George's Golf Club became the first course outside of Scotland to host the Open Championship.

Many passionate golfers have been affiliated with Royal St George's throughout its history, with an impressive line-up of prominent names and faces having teed off at the 1st hole over the years. Wander into the clubhouse, and above a grand fireplace you'll find a board brandishing the names of all the club's past captains. Titles including Colonel, General, Earl and Major are not out of place here, and there's even a future monarch to be found. The Prince of Wales served from 1927 to 1928, before later becoming King Edward VIII.

One particularly noteworthy player from the club's history books is James Bond author, Ian Fleming. An avid golfer, residing nearby at St. Margaret's Bay, Fleming was a member of Royal St George's for years. The author was captain-elect of St. George's at the time of his death, and even lunched at the club the day before he died of a heart attack aged 56 in 1964.

With eyes eagerly focused forward on the forthcoming Championship, it's worth casting a memory back over the fourteen events that lie before it, each one with a deserving place in The Open Championship's illustrious biography. Over the years, the historic links at Sandwich have seen some of golf's greatest players lift the Claret Jug including – but not limited to – Harry Vardon, Walter Hagen, Henry Cotton, Bobby Locke, Sandy Lyle, and Greg Norman.

It was last played at Royal St George's in 2011, when Darren Clarke

showed his mastery of links golf in challenging weather conditions to become Champion Golfer of the Year.

Alongside 14 past Open Championships, St George's has also hosted many more top events throughout the years, including the Walker Cup, Curtis Cup, the Amateur Championship, the PGA Championship, Home Internationals, and the Brabazon Trophy.

Back to today though, where this summer, golfers look to Kent once again as The 149th Open Championship adds another chapter to this golf course's epic story.

With The Open last held at Royal St George's a decade ago, demand to be in Sandwich for golf's oldest and most prestigious event scaled unprecedented heights before the global pandemic struck, with last year's postponed event being recorded as the fastest selling to date. In fact, excitement for the return of the Claret Jug to the South East was such that the record for the highest selling day of advanced tickets in Open history was smashed in under seven hours. Now, 12 months after the event was originally scheduled to take place, up to 32,000 spectators will flock to Royal St George's for one of golf's greatest spectacles.

Much has been made of the efforts in the years leading up to 2019 to get Portrush — the club and the community — updated to hold a modern Open. On the macro level, there was the need for land to build 215,000



5th Hole Royal St George's



15th Hole Royal St George's

square feet of tent space for a spectator village. The club approved using the Dunluce Course's old 17th and 18th holes for this space, with two replacement holes built by Martin Ebert (the seventh and eighth) on adjoining property. Ebert also added 22 new bunkers and five new greens to get the new Dunluce Course Open ready.

Additionally, there was the installation of more than 40 miles of pipework, 40 miles of control cable and more than three miles of roads created, including an underground tunnel beside the new eighth green and ninth tee for players to use to allow for better spectator flow in that part of the course.

This year at Royal St George's, preparations have been no less meticulous, and in fact an added layer of planning has had to take place to ensure that all Covid-19 protocols have been strictly adhered to. As late as a month before the tournament, attendance numbers were still up in the air, but event organisers acted swiftly upon Government announcements to ensure that all spectators attending the event could do so in the knowledge that no stone had been left unturned to ensure an enjoyable, exciting and — most importantly — safe Open Championship could take place.

With the world's greatest players descending on Kent, it will be another man from the island of Ireland who will defend the title of champion in

Sandwich after Shane Lowry clinched his first Claret Jug at The 148th Open at Royal Portrush. Lowry's victory was well received throughout the golfing world, given his universal popularity, but no more so than in his native Ireland where celebrations went on well into the night — and the days that followed!

Such is the prestige associated with the event, many professional golfers eye The Open as the one championship that they dream of winning above all others, and that legacy also lends itself to the host venue. Very rarely are the eyes of the world focused on one place and even more rarely does that particular region happen to be one that is situated on your very doorstep.

With world-class golf, exquisite dining, and a wealth of other attractions available to enjoy, there's little wonder why the Garden of England is viewed as a jewel in Britain's tourism crown; a jewel that is sparkling more than ever thanks, in no small part, to one of sport's greatest events heading to one of its most prestigious venues. That's why now is the ideal time to immerse yourself in a part of golf's rich history and, quite literally, follow in the footsteps of the world's greatest golfers.

To find out more about playing at Royal St George's, visit: www.royalstgeorges.com



2nd Hole Prince's Golf Club

THE EVER-EVOLVING ARCHITECTURE OF PRINCE'S GOLF CLUB

With the start of The 149th Open Championship just days away, final preparations are being made at Royal St George's as the famous venue gets set to host the world's greatest golf tournament for the 15th time in its illustrious history. What many people may not know is that Royal St George's is, in fact, one of three Open Championship venues located within a stone's throw from one another. Here we take a look at neighbouring Prince's Golf Club, and the architectural developments that have made it one of Kent's finest golfing attractions.

While steeped in history, Prince's Golf Club offers everything that could be desired from a modern championship links destination situated in idyllic coastal surroundings. Prince's is comprised of three 9-hole loops - The Shore, The Dunes and The Himalayas - that all have their own unique architectural and stylistic characteristics. Recent redevelopment, under the stewardship of renowned golf course architects McKenzie & Ebert, has given the club a modern edge while returning some of the original charm of the pre-war course that hosted the 1932 Open, won by the legendary Gene Sarazen.

A host of Local Final Qualifying for The Open Championship since 2018, Prince's also co-hosted The Amateur Championship in 2013 and 2017 and boasts a rich and emotive history since its inception nearly 120 years ago. The story of Prince's starts at the beginning of the last century when Sir Harry Mallaby-Deeley, a regular golfing visitor to East

Kent, took it upon himself to establish a new links at Sandwich that would, in particular, welcome lady, junior and family golfers.

Along with his Cambridge University cohort, Percy Montagu Lucas - who went on to become the club's first secretary - Sir Harry put up most of the capital for the project, with the land being donated by the Earl of Guilford. Charles Hutchings, the 1902 Amateur Champion, was brought on-board as architect and he and Percy laid out the course in 1904, before final works were completed late in 1906.

A.J. Balfour, who served as Prime Minister from 1902 to 1905, drove the first ball as Club Captain in the Founder's Vase in the following June, and just five years later Prince's hosted the 1912 English Ladies Open, won by Miss M Gardner.



1914 saw the foreshore and links become a coastal defence and training area with barbed wire entanglements and anti-aircraft batteries, but P.M Lucas kept the greens cut throughout WW1 and once the war had ended the course was soon restored, hosting the 1922 Ladies Open that was won by Joyce Wethered.

A period of great prosperity followed for Prince's, culminating with the club hosting The Open in 1932, but before long the country was once again at war and the links and club premises were requisitioned by the military, this time as a battle training ground which resulted in the course suffering untold damage before it was finally derequisitioned in 1949.

Australian property developer Sir Aynsley Bridgland took control of the land and, in 1950, Sir Guy Campbell and John Morrison were tasked with redesigning and restoring the course. Despite the damage that occurred during the war, Campbell and Morrison were able to incorporate 17 of the original greens into a new layout of 27 holes, plus two practice holes. The Shore, Dunes and Himalayas courses – each starting and finishing beside the clubhouse – were officially born.

Fast forward to today and vast open sand scrape areas, natural wetlands and feature walkways accentuate the links' raw, natural aesthetic while sprawling, challenging green complexes, strategic bunkering and elevated tee positions ensure a tough, yet rewarding challenge for any discerning golfer. With stunning panoramas of the English Channel throughout, Prince's is very much the epitome of a modern, yet historic, golfing masterpiece.

Now owned by Ramac Holdings, in May 2018 Prince's unveiled its stunning, newly reimagined Himalayas course after nine months of work under the stewardship and design of renowned international golf course architects Mackenzie & Ebert – transforming the Himalayas into one of the finest stretches of links golf in the country.

Officially opened in front of some of the country's most influential golf media and personnel, the new nine features two new holes; a short, signature par-3 fifth hole which plays out towards the sea, as well as a long par-5 second hole which combines the second and third holes of the old layout and can be stretched to a whopping 615 yards.

Martin Ebert and Mike Howard, of Mackenzie and Ebert Limited, visited the links on multiple occasions to assess the land and scope for the project prior to undertaking the work, and the company subsequently produced an Historic Report which analysed historic, pre-war and wartime RAF photography and unveiled a variety of interesting features which helped to frame the narrative of the new nine and restore some of the traditional elements of the course.

To recognise the historical significance of the site, a replica spitfire propeller was installed by the third tee, paying tribute to the heroics of fighter pilot, PB 'Laddie' Lucas. A previous Walker Cup captain and son of one of the founders of Prince's, Laddie made a forced landing on the site in July 1943 after his aircraft was badly damaged by enemy fire as he returned to RAF Manston from a mission over northern France.

Another nod to the site's historical importance saw the new fifth hole named Bloody Point in reference to the great naval battle that took place in Sandwich in AD 851 on the land where Prince's now sits. This short par-3, with the backdrop of the English Channel, is one of several notable changes that increased the par of the nine to 36, while extensive changes to the bunkering, water hazards, green



surrounds, out-of-play areas, tees, and clearance of trees were all included in the project.

The works didn't stop there, though, and in 2020 Prince's was celebrating the opening of Smugglers' Landing, a completely new par-3. Commenting soon after the completion of the redevelopment works, Rob McGuirk, General Manager of Prince's Golf Club, was understandably thrilled at the outcome of the project. "The last three years have been an important step in the history of Prince's and the transformation of the courses, under the guidance of Martin Ebert and our Links Superintendent, Sean McLean, has been spectacular," he said.

"Culminating with the opening of Smugglers' Landing, the entire project is something for everyone involved with the club to be proud of. We're thrilled with the outcome and the dramatic improvement in the visual and playing aspects of all 27 holes at Prince's."

The new hole plays as the fifth on the Shore nine at Prince's and, to set the scene for the history of the Sandwich Flats and the fight against smuggling in Sandwich Bay, for which the hole is themed, the club have installed a replica scene by the walkway to the tee.

Commenting on the finalised works, Ebert added: "Following the creation of a new short hole on the Himalayas nine, it was equally exciting to do the same with Smugglers' Landing on the Shore. The challenge was to create a hole with a different character to Bloody Point and the away-sloping green has achieved that, not to mention the extensive bare sand areas in the carry and to the right of the hole.

"The creation of these sand areas throughout the entire landscape of the Shore and Dunes nines in this phase of work has created so many stunning links vistas but none better and more impressive than for Smugglers' Landing. "

The wide-ranging improvements made across all three loops directly led to Prince's breaking back into the Great Britain and Ireland Top 100 rankings for the first time in 35 years with Top100GolfCourses.com, Golf World and National Club Golfer magazines, a trajectory which looks sure to continue as the club goes from strength to strength, steeped in history and ever-evolving as one of the greatest tests of links that the country has to offer.

To find out more about Prince's Golf Club, visit: www.princesgolfclub.co.uk



Royal Cinque Ports © Kevin Murray

THE KENT COAST'S TRIO OF OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP VENUES

To have even one Open venue in your region is something that not many places can lay claim to, but to have three is something very special indeed. With The 149th Open Championship heading to the Kent coast this summer as the world's greatest golfers descend on Royal St George's, here we take a look at our region's trio of world-class Open Championship venues.

The Garden of England has long been revered as one of the country's most idyllic and spectacular areas of natural beauty, a county where visitors can enjoy the peace and serenity of the countryside while also savouring gastronomic delights and a vast array of tourist attractions to rival anywhere in the country. A haven of architectural beauty and rich sporting history, the county is rightly regarded as a glittering jewel in Britain's tourism crown – not least the stunning trio of championship links courses along the southeast Kent coastline that help to make our region arguably the UK's premier golf destination. This natural links haven carries a rich history and tradition of quality, having played host to a combined seventeen Open Championships through the years, with an eighteenth now firmly in sight.

From the towering dunes and wild landscape of Royal St George's Golf Club, to the open natural sand scrapes of neighbouring Prince's and undulating topography of Royal Cinque Ports, this majestic stretch of English links has it all. Just 74 miles from London, Kent's three Open venues offer an idyllic golf break and an unforgettable experience across the board, combining everything that any discerning tourist could possibly wish for when planning their next golfing break.

Prince's is comprised of three 9-hole loops – The Shore, The Dunes and The Himalayas – that all have their own unique architectural and stylistic characteristics. Recent redevelopment, under the stewardship of renowned golf course architects McKenzie & Ebert, has given the club a modern edge while returning some of the original charm of the pre-war course that hosted the 1932 Open, won by the legendary Gene Sarazen.

Vast open sand scrape areas, natural wetlands and feature walkways perpetuate the raw, back-to-nature aesthetic while the large, challenging green complexes, strategic bunkering and elevated tee positions ensure a tough, yet rewarding challenge. With stunning panoramas of the English Channel throughout, Prince's presents a welcome break from the hubbub and transports visitors to a tranquil golfing paradise.

Once again, this incredible coastline returns to the global spotlight this summer with Royal St George's hosting The 149th Open Championship. A major part of England's golf heritage, St George's offers a fundamentally traditional experience as well as one of the finest links layouts in the world.

Its 7,204-yard, par-70 links has evolved into a sprawling maze where holes scamper in all directions, evoking the feeling of a wild sense of space. Natural amphitheatres created by the dunes and rugged terrain provide the backdrop for an awe-inspiring test with no two holes alike. The course roams through mammoth dunes, especially the thrilling stretch from four to six, which provides many memorable moments.

Renowned as one of the finest courses in the world, golfers and visitors alike can walk in the footsteps of history and emulate the greats of the game who have hoisted the Claret Jug here.

Just a few kilometres down the coast road in Deal, Royal Cinque Ports, a traditional out-and-back links dating back to 1892, is of similar calibre.

The club played host to The Open twice in the early part of the 20th century and has carved out its own place as one of the country's most iconic links courses.

With a routing that's a riot to play, wild green complexes and the prevailing seaside breeze always playing a part, Royal Cinque Ports presents a stern test to lovers of links golf. Located closest to the shoreline of all three courses, Deal, as it is commonly known, provides golfers with picturesque views and challenging shots from tee boxes perched up on the sea wall. The fairways and greens roll fast and undulate through humps and swales, making a flat lie and stock shot a rarity. This is classic links golf of the highest level.

Quaint, medieval Sandwich and quintessentially English seaside town, Deal, provide added incentive to explore England's oldest county with a variety of cultural and historical attractions as well as sweeping beaches and coastal walks.

In addition to accommodation options in the nearby towns and villages, Princes' Lodge has capacity for 76 with 38 rooms, suites and apartments offering a hub for travelling golfers to stay and enjoy stunning views across the English Channel and over to the White Cliffs of Ramsgate.

The Brasserie on the Bay serves high quality food sourced from local Kentish providers meaning menus are created to coincide with seasonal

produce, while the cosy lounge and bar offers a relaxing spot to unwind after a day on the links.

With neighbours Prince's and Royal St George's separated only by a fence line, and Deal a short jaunt down the coast, these three championship courses represent a closely knit trio that rivals any in the world. The history, stories and ever-enduring legacy of these Kent classics continues to evolve while they offer the chance to experience a bucket list golf trip entrenched in history.

This summer, the world's best golfers will descend on the Kent coast for The 149th Open Championship, an event that will live long in the memory following the postponement of the event last summer due to the pandemic. With the likes of Rory McIlroy, Dustin Johnson, and Bryson DeChambeau treading the hallowed St George's links, the spotlight will be shining bright on the Kent coast as the watching world waits with bated breath to see who will be crowned Champion Golfer of the Year.

And how fitting that, after a year of such uncertainty around the world, the Open Championship should be heading back to a venue so familiar to hosting the prestigious tournament following 14 previous events stretching all the way back to the first of them in 1984. If we can be certain of one thing, it's that this year's event looks set to be one to remembered for years to come as another thrilling chapter is written in golf, and Royal St George's', rich and famous history.



Royal St George's



London Golf Club

ITINERARY: A COUNTRY ESCAPE WITH LONDON GOLF CLUB

Sometimes you just want to pack up your clubs, escape the city, and take a rural retreat. Positioned just 20 miles from London and within the beauty of the Kent countryside, the 700 acre London Golf Club makes for the relaxed golf escape you've been dreaming of. What's more, with country castles and vineyards on the club's doorstep, you've got the perfect excuse to extend your stay and really make a break of it.

PLAY

London Golf Club

One of the finest downland courses in Europe, London Golf Club's International Course has played host to the 2018 and 2019 Staysure PGA Senior Championship, Volvo World Match Play and Regional Open Qualifying. Spanning acres of idyllic countryside, it goes without saying, you can expect glorious views while you play, along with nail-biting tee shots over lakes and fast fairways for a challenging round that's sure to get the heart pumping.

THE NEXT DAY

Mount Vineyard

No Kentish retreat would be complete without a little wine tasting and vineyard visit, so we recommend heading just a short drive away to The Mount Vineyard near Sevenoaks. Enjoy an afternoon of vineyard views, tastings of some of their finest wines and a tour that takes you from grape to glass as you discover this local hidden gem. Round off your day with a cheese board paired with a sparkling tippie or two for a real taste of Kent.

Great Comp Garden

Renowned as one of Kent's finest gardens, this tranquil space will help you slip into neutral and put the stresses of everyday life firmly on pause. Stroll seven acres of rare plants and discover romantic ruins, a fairytale Italian garden, peaceful woodland and borders packed with colour. And because no country staycation would be complete without a little freshly baked cake, be sure to stop by the Old Dairy Tearooms for a delectable cream tea.

STAY

Hever Castle

Oh yes, in Kent you really can spend the night in a castle! Check in at Hever Castle's very own bed and breakfast and you'll be guaranteed a memorable evening in one of 28 luxurious rooms set in the Astor and Anne Boleyn wings of the castle. Relax onto sumptuous sofas in the beautifully panelled lounge or take a turn in the rather splendid Billiards Room for a true country house experience. The next day, we recommend exploring the castle and discovering its rich history (after all, this was Anne Boleyn's childhood home), before strolling through those magnificent award-winning gardens.



Leeds Castle Golf Club

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The Foundry © Visit Kent

ITINERARY: AN ACTIVE GETAWAY WITH PRINCE'S GOLF CLUB

Birthdays, making up for lost time, and marking those big celebrations, when it comes to booking a staycation with friends this summer, a golf break at Prince's Golf Club in Sandwich has got to be top of the list. Championship links golf on courses that have seen some incredible redevelopment over the last few years, expect plenty of thrills with a round at Prince's. Plus, with more adrenaline-fuelled fun to be found just a few miles away (think mountain biking and unmissable live sport), accommodation at the club's Lodge provides a great base so you can really make a weekend of it.

PLAY

Multiple time former host of The Open, and just a stone's throw from hosts of The 149th Open, Royal St George's, trust us when we say you can expect exceptional golf at Prince's. Between The Shore, The Dunes and The Himalayas, you'll find each loop has its own characteristics, not to mention some considerable investment. Set right on the coast of Sandwich, you'll be treated to incredible views along the way, but be warned as those views come with the added challenge of seaside breezes and rolling greens that all make for a thrilling round of golf!

THE NEXT DAY

Betteshanger Park

What action-packed weekend would be complete without a two-wheeled adventure? Head just up the road to Betteshanger Park in Deal and you'll be able to hire bikes and take on one of the park's traffic-free trails. Be it the 3km tarmac track, or the 10km mountain bike track through the park, with its varying difficulty levels (red trail, anyone?), we can guarantee there's something for the whole group at this local favourite. But if you really fancy stepping up the action, try your hands at Battlezone Archery, a team-based game combining dodgeball, archery and paintball (without the pain) for a real taste of adventure.

Kent Cricket

Live sport has got to be on the agenda for an active weekend, and the Kent County Cricket Club's historic Spitfire Ground in nearby Canterbury is the place to swing into action. Take your pick from their packed programme of matches and enjoy the traditional English

pastime brought to life, with the flair, excitement, and nail-biting tension of the modern game of cricket.

The Foundry

Set in the very heart of Canterbury city centre, The Foundry Brew Pub crafts over 16 ales, lagers and ciders, and distils nine spirits, all on site within the incredible 18th century building. Of course, we recommend pulling up a chair, grabbing a bite, and toasting the weekend while you're here, but if you really want to get to enjoy that grain to glass experience, we'd suggest taking things one step further and booking onto one of their tours for the ultimate behind-the-scenes peek into crafting award-winning drinks.

STAY

Action-packed days deserve a relaxing place to stay, so we recommend staying at the The Lodge situated at the entrance of Prince's. Whether you choose to spoil your friends with a stay in one of the lavish suites, or settle into one of the luxury en-suite bedrooms, you can expect a great stay, with the added bonus of club storage and views across the courses. Better still, round off your day with dinner and drinks at The Brasserie on the Bay for a taste of local Kent produce and seasonal specials.



Royal St George's

THE HISTORY OF THE OPEN IN KENT

Darren Clarke, Ben Curtis, Greg Norman, Sandy Lyle...the list of champions to have lifted the Claret Jug on Kent's coast is a lengthy one (running to 17 names to be exact). With anticipation building over who this year's champion will be, we're taking a step back and looking at our glorious county's long history in hosting The Open Championship.

With 14 Open Championships to its name, Royal St George's has hosted the famous tournament more times than any other course outside of Scotland. But how did it all begin? In 1887 Scottish founder Dr William Laidlaw Purves' dream of creating a rival course to the iconic St Andrews was finally realised. It's said that Purves first spotted the land that was to become Royal St George's from St Clement's Church tower in Sandwich and, just a few years later, that very land staged the first Open Championship to be held outside of Scotland.

With reduced rail fares negotiated to encourage Scottish pros to make the trip south, it's safe to say there was a little uncertainty over the turnout for England's inaugural staging, but with 94 starters, the event saw record numbers since the Championship began. But that wasn't the only record of the week. After a close first couple of rounds between Douglas Rolland, Andrew Kirkaldy and John Henry Taylor, Taylor took the victory with a total tally of 326 shots, the highest to ever win The Open!



The nail-biting firsts continued for Royal St George's, as the club cemented its place as one of the leading courses in the world. In 1904 professional Jack White went from strength-to-strength in his bid for the title. In a record-setting performance, White continuously improved his score with each round, breaking 300 over 72 holes for the first time in The Open's history. But with James Braid close behind in the final round, things could have been very different for White if it wasn't for a few misinformed spectators. With a tie in sight, Braid was told he only needed a four to match White, but after carding a 71, it turned out those well-meaning spectators were wrong – Braid had needed a three and ended just one shot short of White's winning score!

1922 saw another close call as American, Walter Hagen, claimed the first of his four titles. In the third round Hagen took the lead with an impressive running total of 300 shots, so impressive in fact it was thought unbeatable, and several journalists notified the newspaper offices of Hagen's impending win! Nevertheless, in the fourth round George Duncan made a remarkable comeback, closing just one short of Hagen. With a four needed on the 18th, Duncan's approach rolled into a dip to the left of the green, ultimately costing him a tie and leading to Hagen's victory. Nevertheless, Duncan's name would still go down in history – to this very day the spot where his ill-fated approach ended up is known as Duncan's Hollow.

After hosting the Championship nine times up until 1938, The Open didn't return to Sandwich for an astonishing 31 years. In fact, so many years had passed since Royal St George's last staging, that a completely new roster of pros had been established, with little familiarity with the course. After winning the World Match Play at Wentworth, Bill Rogers had been persuaded by his friend Ben Crenshaw to compete at Royal St George's. Rogers' first day got off to a shaky start after misreading the starting list and nearly missing his tee time. In fact, if it hadn't been for journalist John Whitbread raising the alarm to Rogers, the history books could have been very different! Luckily, what followed was a remarkable competition, as Jack Nicklaus recorded the worst score of his career on day one and Rogers swept to the top of the leader board, ultimately winning by four strokes to lift the Claret Jug.

It's a tale told many times since, but Darren Clarke's rise to victory in 2011 is the ultimate proof that all good things come to those who wait. After 19 appearances, Clarke took on the wet weather of the coast to win by three strokes – much to the delight of the watching world who came together to celebrate Clarke's emotional victory. With a winter spent playing at Portrush in often challenging weather, this Irishman was well prepped for the conditions that met the pros in Sandwich that summer. Cool and windy weather was no match for a man who had grown up playing links golf on the Irish coast, leading to Clarke becoming the oldest Champion Golfer since Roberto De Vincenzo in 1967.

But Kent's long-running Championship hosting history doesn't end there; in fact, the Kent coast is home to not one but three courses to have staged The Open. In 1909, the eyes of the world turned to Royal Cinque Ports in Deal, just a few miles from Royal St George's. After a fantastic first day, former winner JH Taylor endured a nervy second morning, culminating in a series of missed opportunities and a poor drive on the 16th hole. Despite this, Taylor managed to clinch the title, winning by six strokes and taking the title back nine years after his maiden success. The Open returned to Royal Cinque Ports again in 1920, when Duncan clinched the title in a famous turn of events that saw him take the lead on the second day after purchasing a brand-new driver from the exhibition tent!

Another sensational course on the Kent coast, Prince's hosted the Championship in 1932. American, Gene Sarazen, was the ultimate victor, becoming only the third Champion Golfer to hold the lead after every round of the Championship. Interestingly, it was also at the 1932 Championship in Sandwich that the newly invented sand wedge was first used in competition, helping Sarazen to achieve a new scoring record of just 283. That's right, the sand wedge was first used in Sandwich!

So, there you have it, a (very) brief look at Kent's astonishing Open Championship history. With three top quality links courses, record-breaking scores, and unexpected twists, it's been a nail-biting 134 years...And who knows what excitement this year's Championship is ready to deliver!



THE EUROPEAN TOUR RETURNS TO LONDON GOLF CLUB

London Golf Club is ready to grasp its moment as it returns to the European Tour limelight once again.

The stunning 36-hole venue in Ash, which boasts two supreme Jack Nicklaus-designed courses – The Heritage and The International – will host the Cazoo Classic, formerly known as the English Open, as part of the UK Swing on the European Tour schedule this year (August 12-15).

Taking place just 20 miles from the capital and with 700 acres of magnificent Kent countryside providing the memorable landscapes, it will represent the fourth and final chapter of the UK Swing this summer and will be the club's first chance to stage a European Tour event since the Volvo World Match Play seven years ago.

For a venue which only opened in 1994, it already boasts a rich tournament history, having also hosted the European Open (2008 and 2009) and, more recently, two editions of the Staysure PGA Seniors Championship in 2018 and 2019.

There is already a healthy link with golfing royalty thanks to 18-time Major winner Nicklaus, who brought all of his trademark crafty bunker placement and course design skills to the party.

But the great and the good of the sport have continued to stroll the same manicured fairways on a regular basis ever since.

Indeed, back in July 1994, the opening itself paved the way and set the tone on what was to come.

A Charity Challenge Skins Match on The Heritage saw Nicklaus go up against fellow golf icons Seve Ballesteros and Tony Jacklin, with the popular Spaniard eventually taking the honours on that occasion.

There are some big plans for the future too with European Tour, Challenge Tour, women's events, junior events and disabled events all

on the agenda in the coming years.

And that focus on the future has become even more important to the European Tour Destination venue in recent times as they also turn their attention to environmental sustainability.

The appointment of energy consultants, GreenClub, is based on the ambition to become carbon neutral in the coming years as they develop environmental strategies to address current and future business needs, while also delivering major events in a sustainable and environmentally-responsible way.

Although The Heritage is exclusively for members and their guests, The International course is of equal stature as a challenge to test all aspects of your game.

Just bear in mind that the risk v reward battle is a constant theme for any Nicklaus design and mental strength will also come under close scrutiny.

You'll be left asking yourself regular questions of your ability: "Can I just clear that bunker to set up the easier approach shot?" Or "is that water in play if I hit the driver?"

Much as you may well be left cursing your decisions at various intervals as you realise you've fallen into the Golden Bear's clever trap all over again, there are also plenty of those memorable moments to take away with you if you find yourself on the right side of the risk v reward conundrum.

www.londongolf.co.uk



The Huts at Royal St George's



A LUXURY FOODIE WEEKEND WITH ROYAL ST GEORGE'S

When it comes to the crème de la crème of golf breaks, a visit to The 149th Open hosts, Royal St George's has got to be up there. Play the course where history has been made across 14 Open Championships and walk in the footsteps of the world's golfing greats. And, as this weekend should be all about the very best Kent has to offer, we recommend extending your stay and experiencing some of Kent's famed food and drink for the ultimate luxury break.

PLAY

Royal St George's

The course that's on every golfer's mind this summer, Royal St George's Golf Club is one of England's most picturesque links courses, with beautiful views across Pegwell Bay and a coastline edged with chalk cliffs. Founded more than 100 years ago, it's no secret the course is deceptively challenging, with rolling fairways, blind tee shots and the UK's tallest and deepest bunker that all make for a thrilling round.

THE NEXT DAY

Simpsons Wine Estate

Just a few miles away in Barham village, Simpsons Wine Estate produces some of Kent's finest wines, with an ethos that links their expertise in French winemaking with the iconic characteristics and nuances of the Kent North Downs terroir. A tour and tasting here is a must, whether you choose one of the Friday evening Sunset Sessions or a weekend tour. Whenever you visit, you can expect beautiful views across the idyllic Roman Road Vineyard, followed by a tutored tasting of a selection of their exquisite wines in The Glass House Tasting Room.

Chequers Kitchen

Whitstable oysters, Romney Marsh lamb, Kentish strawberries...the Garden of England boasts an impressive foodie repertoire and a range of delectable produce, so a cookery experience at Deal's Chequers Kitchen is the perfect way to celebrate those culinary credentials. Learn the art of pastry-making, discover artisan bread-making, or master any number of international cuisines on a cookery course, or settle in for a relaxed supper or lunch and let their expert chefs take care of the cooking.

STAY

Kent and Sussex Cottages

With over 350 cottages to choose from, a stay with Kent and Sussex Cottages can offer anything from a coastal hideaway minutes from Royal St George's, to a rural sanctuary in the heart of Kent's rolling countryside. Whether you're in search of cosy log fires, a traditional oast house that's oh-so-Kentish, beach huts, or luxury hot tubs, your perfect staycation location is just waiting to be discovered.



The Turner Contemporary © Visit Kent

18 REASONS TO EXTEND YOUR GOLF BREAK IN KENT

Come for the golf, stay for... everything else! We're lucky enough to be holding The 149th Open for the 18th time, so we thought we'd let you in on 18 reasons to stick around in Kent for an extended break this summer. We know you'll have a tee-rrific time...

Beautiful Beaches

Kent has not one, not two, but nine Blue Flag beaches, awarded for their overall quality and general loveliness, which means you're spoiled for choice across our sprawling coastline. Choose from Stone Bay next to beautiful Broadstairs, Tankerton beach adorned with quaint beach huts in Whitstable or Botany Bay to marvel at the chalk stacks and turquoise hues.

Attractive Accommodation

There's a place for everyone to rest their head in the Garden of England, whether you're after a little bit of luxury or secluded self-sufficient home-from-home. Spoil yourself with the finest hospitality at the plush One Warwick Park in Tunbridge Wells, or wake up to dazzling sea views at the Hythe Imperial Hotel. Alternatively, stay the night in our county capital Maidstone at the Mercure Maidstone Great Danes Hotel, or in the heart of the vibrant city of Canterbury at Canterbury Cathedral Lodge. If you want to live like a local, Kent and Sussex cottages and Bloom Stays provide the quintessentially Kentish cottage experience for private independent accommodation.

Five Star Food

Foodies unite! Kent has a reputation for satisfying even the choosiest of taste buds, as we're home to gastropubs galore and a constellation of Michelin-starred wonders. Look to The West House in Biddenden, in a sixteenth century weavers Cottage with a menu so seasonal it constantly changes to ensure you food is the highest quality or the formidable Fordwich Arms just outside of Canterbury. If you want to get out of the countryside and into the harbour, unbeatable sea views at Rocksalt make for a truly unforgettable experience. Additionally, still holding a Michelin star but describing themselves as just a "grotty boozier by the sea", The Sportsman creates the ideal relaxed pub vibe without compromising on top-class cuisine.

Eat Fresh, Eat Local

We're the Garden of England because our terrain is astonishing for the bountiful produce it can muster up; from glorious succulent fruits like our cherries, apples and pears, to recipes that are part of our rich history, like sickly sweet Kentish gypsy tart. Our expansive coast makes us ideal for the freshest seafood available and among our most well-known exports are our Whitstable oysters (we dedicate a whole



Biddenden Vineyards © Visit Kent

festival to the salty superstars every year!) But the best way to get the lay of the Kentish land in a short space of time is to take a trip to artisanal farm-to-floor indoor marketplaces like The Goods Shed in Canterbury and Macknade Food Hall in Faversham, who flaunt the Kentish local produce proudly.

Beer and Beyond

If you're lucky enough to bask in the Kentish sunshine in July, indulge in some al-fresco dining in some of Kent's best beer gardens, like The Swan and Dog in the charming village of Great Chart. If you like your beer best with a beach, overlook the golden sands of Thanet at the Minnis Bay Bar and Brasserie, or the Zetland Arms. Alternatively, crack a cold one waterside with Pier Five in Chatham Maritime or The Wharf in Dartford. If you're a real ale aficionado, go one step further with a full brewery tour, and choose from a true piece of history with Kent's oldest brewery, Shepherd Neame, or hop off the train at Ashford International for the newly opened Curious Brewery.

Prime Wine

We're not the Wine Garden of England for nothing! Kent enjoys one of the finest climates for viticulture, with its chalky terroir said to rival the Champagne region in France. We have some of the best wineries including Chapel Down, Hush Heath, Simpsons and Biddenden Vineyards. Take a tour and enjoy a tippie or two of one of Kent's finest exports. And if you're not a wine lover, you can still get into the spirit by heading down to Copper Rivet gin and vodka distillery at Chatham Dockyard.

Captivating Castles

Did you know Kent has over 30 castles for you to discover during your time with us? We're very proud of our rich regal history! Experience castles fit for a Queen at Anne Boleyn's childhood home of Hever Castle, or Henry VIII's 'Loveliest Castle in the World' at Leeds Castle.

Combining its medieval roots with its instrumental role in World War II, Dover Castle offers a piece of history wherever your interests lie.

Sensational Summer Days

There's plenty for the culture vulture to explore for a day out in Kent. Maybe it's the revitalising seaside air or maybe it's in our DNA, but Kent is imbued with a true artistic spirit which forms the basis for our creative coast. Margate has been inspiring artists from Tracey Emin to JMW Turner, whose namesake is The Turner Contemporary Art Gallery, holding world-renowned art. From world-class art to wild animals, explore Port Lympne Hotel & Reserve or Howlett's Wildlife Animal Park, which make for perfect family days out.

Exciting Evenings Out

If you look out with one of those gorgeous balmy summer nights, there's plenty of ways in Kent to enjoy them. Wander down to Folkestone's Harbour Arm for food stalls and live music out on the sea. Or, why not give yourself and a loved one a civilised evening watching a stage show in Canterbury at the Marlowe Theatre which frequently holds West End touring spectacles, or discover smaller independent gems at Gulbenkian Theatre.

Historic Hubs

It doesn't get more historic than the city of Canterbury, the ancient Roman city which became the epicentre of Anglican church history over a thousand years ago and holds a crucial part in every aspect of English history, from wars to Kings and Queens. Royalty also leaves its stamp on Royal Tunbridge Wells, a delightful stylish town which is home to superb shops and restaurants. Medway is practically swimming in maritime, literary and Norman history, meaning it's ideal for wherever your historical prowess may lie – check out the Historic Dockyard, Chatham whilst there, which was once the pinnacle of the Royal Navy. Medway also holds many of our literary links, being

Charles Dickens' childhood home and inspiring many of his novels. With so much history lurking underneath the vibrant and creative destination it is today, we think that Medway will meet your Great Expectations.

Countryside Strides

Is there anywhere better to relax in the glorious sunshine than in the splendid Kentish countryside? We're the Garden of England, so you'd expect nothing less! Bring a picnic with friends and find some shade under the magnificent trees of Bedgebury Pinetum, or enjoy picturesque panoramic views over Kent from the Wye Downs. Alternatively, get stuck into nature and have a roam round Elham Valley to enjoy bird-watching and explore the waterways and wild flowers with the butterflies, bees and dragonflies. A rambler's dream.

Iconic Landmarks

Vera Lynn knew what she was talking about; the White Cliffs of Dover are a world-famous sight for sore eyes and a Great British symbol of hope and freedom for generations. And there are so many ways to view this stunning feat of natural architecture, from Shakespeare Beach in the west or St Margaret's Bay, to get the perfect photo of our natural wonder! And for man-made spectacles, nestled in the historic city of Canterbury is the world-famous Canterbury Cathedral. Marvel at the stunning ornate features and glistening stain-glass windows, and learn why Canterbury Cathedral is known as 'England in Stone'.

Compelling Coastal Towns

Synonymous with Kent are our charming coastal towns dotted along our sprawling coastline, which all retain their own identity. Bohemian Folkestone is adorned with artwork from stars such as Antony Gormley and Yoko Ono, and boasts the newly renovated Harbour Arm, a truly unique gem out on the sea, with independent food outlets and a champagne bar in a former lighthouse at the end. Situated right next to Folkestone is picturesque Hythe, which feels almost Venetian with its canals right next to the sea. Buzzing and cheerful Deal is full of quirky independent stores and boasts a beautiful pier, with a stunning café, the Deal Pier Kitchen, surrounded by ocean views at the end. Finally, strolling past the boats docked in Ramsgate Harbour on a sunny day, it's been said to feel like a slice of St Tropez in England.

Sporting Spots

We know you're here for the golf, but why not take a swing at something new while you're with us? The high summer is the ideal time to try your hand at our water sports activities - Joss Bay, 200 metres of beautiful blue North Sea, in "The Isle of Thanet" is prime surfing territory, as is the Kent Surf School in Broadstairs, who not only offer surf lessons but paddle boarding and sea kayaking too. Alternatively, get inspired by our friends across the channel and indulge in your Tour de France dreams by cycling around the beautiful countryside! You can rent a bike for seaside cycles in Hythe at Click 2 Cycle.



Hever Castle © Visit Kent



© Ashford Designer Outlet

Relaxing Retreats

If all the golf-ing around has got your muscles aching, why not take some time for yourself and enjoy some of Kent's best spa and health clubs while in town? Indulge in a little bit of luxury with a quintessentially English Afternoon Tea at Canterbury's ABode Hotel or take time for yourself with a soothing massage at The Spring Rooms in Royal Tunbridge Wells. For a truly restorative afternoon, having a swim at the Cave Hotel and Golf Resort pool is sure to leave you feeling good in the mind, body and soul. You're welcome!

Superb Shopping

Our creative spirit means that Kent's coastal towns have become a thriving hub of independent shops that you can't get anywhere else in the world. Look to Folkestone's Old High Street, known as 'Steep Street', which as the name suggests, is an uphill extravaganza of quirky and kooky independents. But we've also got those giant one-stop-shop gems of Westwood Cross and Ashford Designer Outlet, if you want to spoil yourself with a bit of serious retail therapy during your time with us.

Top-Notch Travel

In Kent, whatever activity keeps you with us this summer, you'll be well connected by our fantastic public transport systems that allow you to enjoy everything summer in Kent has to offer at an environmentally friendly price. Southeastern high speed trains get you from the centre of London to the centre of Kent in just 39 minutes, and then can see you through your journey to Sandwich and beyond. You can even get to the most remote of Kent's places with our bus networks, thanks to Arriva and Stagecoach this summer. Getting to Canterbury need not be a pilgrimage this year!

More golf!

We know why you're here, and as much as we can show off all we have to offer, we know you'll have golf in your heart and in your mind when



The Pantilles © Visit Kent

you visit us for The 149th Open. So why not explore more golf while you're here? Stick around just after The 149th Open to see the Senior Amateur Championships or check out the Junior Championship, to see some of golf's upcoming stars before anyone else. Finally, take the opportunity to check out some more of Kent's fabulous golf courses by taking a swing surrounded by history at Leeds Castle, aim for a birdie at London Golf Club or enjoy sea views from every hole at Walmer and Kingsdown Golf Club.

We can't wait to meet you!



By the Beach © Click2Cycle

KENT'S SUMMER OF SPORT

After a sports-shaped hole in our lives last year, outdoor activities and big sporting events are back with a bang this summer, with a great line-up of international events no matter your ball of choice.

While it goes without saying that the sporting event we're most eagerly awaiting over the coming months is The 149th Open, there's a whole raft of athletes limbering up to take centre stage. From the Euros, Wimbledon, The Lions Tour, the Tour de France, and the Olympics to top it all off, we've rounded up the top ways to celebrate a summer of sport here in Kent – and ways to get active and outdoors again across the Garden of England. Grab the balls, pick up your bats and make sure to pack the sun cream – this could be quite the sweaty summer...

Sports galore at Folkestone Harbour Arm

Maybe the sporty season makes you want to lace up your boots and get on out there... Us? We know we'd rather be enjoying the sports with a drink in hand surrounded by the sparkling sea down at Folkestone Harbour Arm. They'll be showing all the sports of the season including the Euros and The 149th Open, so we can cheer on our teams while indulging at their delectable food outlets like The Big Greek Bus, Sole Kitchen and Docker Brewery & Bakehouse... and hopefully making use of the Lighthouse Champagne Bar if England do us proud!

The Tour de France – A wheely good summer awaits

Cycling fans will be gearing up as we start the cycling season with the Giro d'Italia and look ahead to the Tour de France happening this summer – and with Brit Tao Geoghegan Hart seeming like the favourite going in, it could be just the time to celebrate British cycling by getting back in the saddle yourself. Substitute the Champs-Élysées for equally picturesque cycling routes through Betteshanger Park, take a ride round North Kent with views of historic Rochester Cathedral, or enjoy breath-taking coastal vistas as you embark on the Viking Coastal Trail which circles the Isle of Thanet. Want to get involved but not ready to invest just yet? Renting bikes in Kent couldn't be easier, and you could be riding round Bewl Water or cycling seaside with Click2Cycle in no time.

Cricket Season – Ready to be bowled over?

There's a whole host of cracking cricket events lined up this summer including the inaugural Hundred tournament and the first World Test Championship final at Lord's, and we're ready to support our local Kent

County Cricket Club again. Both the men's and women's teams have their matches lined up, and we're ready to head down and support.

The Euros - Football's coming home...

The Euros start on 11th June and consist of 51 matches in 12 cities across Europe, with the highlight of the group stage coming on Friday, 18th June when England host Scotland at Wembley. Enjoy having the footie back by watching it on the big screen as part of Dreamland's Summer Social - sipping ice cold drinks and enjoying the sea air of Margate could make us forgive any bad ref decision...

Tokyo Olympics - Going for gold

Tokyo will stage the opening ceremony of the 32nd Olympic Games in July and that's when the sports fever really kicks in. Get into the aquatic events and discover your inner Rebecca Adlington with the Mercure Maidstone Great Danes pool - or maybe go more 'Total Wipeout' at Bewl Water's Aqua Park. We do find ourselves getting invested in the more unusual sports too - which is why we'll be attempting some archery lessons at Hever Castle to get us ready to see those five rings again!

Running - Run, Forrest, Run...

We've been saying we'll pick up running since Mo Farah and the Super Saturday of 2012, but now we've had a year without watching the marathon and Olympic athletics, we're ready to get that runner's high ourselves. Look to your local 5k, 10k or half marathon events coming up this summer and into the autumn, or lace up your shoes and head straight out to one of Kent's stunning running routes, including Maidstone's Mote Park, Dunorlan Park situated in picture-perfect Tunbridge Wells, or Sittingbourne's newest green space Milton Creek Country Park.

British KiteSurfing Championships - Bring Cali to Kent

Now maybe you already knew that we were hosting The 149th Open this year, but we bet you didn't know that we'll be hosting the British Kitesurfing Championships too! Taking place between 21st and 22nd August in Ramsgate, this two day event will include kitesurfing, windsurfing and foiling, and we have a feeling that seeing these incredible athletes will leave us wanting to get out on the waves ourselves! We'll be looking to Active Ramsgate for lessons, and who knows? Maybe we'll be competing on the waves next year...





Sandwich from River Stour © White Cliffs Country

SPOTLIGHT ON SANDWICH

Between 11th and 18th July the prestigious 149th Open lands in Kent, but where exactly is the host town Sandwich and what is it known for besides the eponymous breaded product? We take a look behind the veil of the golfing world and explore this historic town.

Sandwich – whose name originates from the nearby sands, 'sand', and 'wic' meaning a 'building for trading purposes' or simply 'trading post on the sands' – ensured the town was a bustling trading post. With Richborough Roman Fort just over a mile north of the town, the area has a rich and long history. In the 11th century Sandwich joined up with Dover, Hythe, Romney and Hastings to form what is known as the Cinque Ports, a collection of ports to hold ships for use by the Crown.

Since the 11th Century, Sandwich has had a rich history, a lot of which you can see on a trip along Strand Street, which is thought to have the longest row of timbered houses in the country. While on a wander around the town you will surprisingly see some Dutch influence – which is the result of the Flemish refugees who were granted asylum by Queen Elizabeth I herself in the 1560s – including some homes with large Dutch style windows and new industries for the time, such as weaving. With the jaunt continuing, you can take in links of the famous residents and people of Sandwich such as Edwin Lutyens and Roger Manwood. However, world famous for his modern-day food staple, John

Montagu 4th Earl of Sandwich, is considered the 'inventor' of the fabled sustenance that is the sandwich and thus truly puts this town on the map.

Modern day Sandwich makes for a quaint and relaxed day out. Lining its ancient streets are a selection of independent shops, cafes and pubs that make for a very British day out. One of the best places to start the discovery of the area is at the Sandwich Guildhall Museum. On a visit you'll be able to find exhibitions on the Roman past, artefacts from the Mesolithic (middle stone age) period, and Sandwich's Magna Carta which dates from 1300. Not only fascinating on the inside, but the building from the outside is the town's Guildhall, which dates from 1579 and is fitting of the town with its timber framed exterior.

Heading back toward the Stour shoreline sits St Peter's Church, which for a small fee you can ascend to the top of its tower and breathe in the fresh sea air and views across the medieval town. It was at the top of this tower that Dr Laidlaw Purves observed the outstanding piece of land to build Royal St George's, giving Kent its famous course. Here you'll also

be able to spot the winding river, which once you've descended the tower, you can take a trip along and out to sea to spot some of Kent's marine wildlife – which may or may not include seals!

If all that wandering and uncovering has got you hankering for a meal pit stop then the Bell Hotel is the perfect place. Sitting next to the River Stour, and opposite one of the town's defences is the patchwork front Barbican, once you step through the Edwardian revolving doors you are joining the long list of people who have travelled to this hotel since Tudor times. With a substantial amount of dining space both indoors and out, and a menu that encompasses dishes featuring Kentish Ashmore cheese to traditional fish and chips, you won't be left feeling hungry here.

Venturing just outside of the town you will find Richborough Roman Fort that was founded by Romans who landed on the shores nearby in 43AD. Once a fortification on Watling Street that connected the area to London, Richborough developed into a civilian town and port which held an amphitheatre, of which you can still see today alongside the huge stone walls.

Moving further south toward the nearby town of Deal, you'll need to spot the famous Ham Sandwich signpost (yes you read that right!) pointing to the nearby hamlet of Ham and toward Sandwich. On your journey be sure to stop off at Betteshanger Country Park, which reflects on Kent's past as a coal mining hotspot. Today the area is an outdoors haven with 250 acres in total. So, if you're looking to do a different type of activity from golf then you can join a parkrun or hire a bike and head out on the 3km tarmac track and 10km of mountain bike trails, but if you're with the kids then take them out on the rope walks, swinging steps and swinging rope snake.

Once you reach Deal you will be rewarded with a beautiful seaside town, currently going through a bit of a renaissance period, with boutique restaurants, places to rest your head and plenty of shops.

With sweeping views across the English Channel toward Belgium, Henry VIII presumed that the town would be the ideal place for an attack by invaders and constructed the Tudor Rose-esque Deal Castle. Today, the castle is managed by English Heritage and on a wander around you can discover the captain's residence to the keep which provides beautiful views toward the cliffs at Kingsdown.

Stepping closer toward the sea you'll see traditional fishing boats on the shoreline selling the day's catch, as well as the 300-metre-long pier. Reconstructed in 1957, like the town, the pier still feels as though it's holding onto its heritage, being a popular place to watch fishermen pull up mackerel or whiting. Continuing your voyage out to sea you'll come across the pier's café, which serves up local treats with unobstructed views right across the Channel.

Heading inland and to the town itself, you may get a little lost in the tiny lanes that were popular with the smuggling that occurred in the town, with many of the properties having remains of secret tunnels and places where the smugglers could hide! Once you've found a way out, it's time to take to the high street and smuggle some of your own goods back home. Whether you are after French wines, limited edition home furnishings or a new piece of art, Deal high street is a bohemian and creative spot which was picked up in 2013 when the town won High Street of the Year.

If after a few too many cakes or seafood delights you want to burn off the calories, take a walk along the flat and pristine shoreline toward Walmer



Sunset view from Deal Pier © White Cliffs Country



Dover Marina © White Cliffs Country

Castle. A recurring theme is the Cinque Ports, and Walmer Castle is no different – as it's the residence of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. Previous holders of this post include the namesake of the Wellington boot, Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington, and more recently Winston Churchill and the Queen Mother. Steeped in history as varied as the wondrous gardens themselves, the castle is worthy of a visit even if it's just to brush up on your national history!

Just a 5 minute drive from the castle is the Walmer & Kingsdown Golf Club, a prestigious downland course on the White Cliffs. Designed by Scottish golfer James Braid, year-round golf is possible because of the chalk foundations, and with views of either the sea or the Garden of England countryside (and possibly France too), the course is a splendid afternoon's choice. The 6,471 yards make for a challenge for all abilities, with the club priding itself on its inclusive identity, with 'a deep-seated community-spirit and friendly, family atmosphere'.

As this discovery journey along from Sandwich is quickly turning into a coastal escape, it would be coarse to not include one of England's most famous gateways to England – Dover. The town includes English landmarks Dover Castle and its wartime tunnels to the White Cliffs, so

if you've just passed through you need to make a stop at this jewel in Kent's crown.

Standing tall and proud is the iconic castle, which has had fortifications to protect the country for thousands of years at the closest point to France in England, and in turn has been at the forefront of defence for nine centuries. Stories from the castle are vivid and extensive from a Roman lighthouse and dramatic medieval interiors, right up to secret tunnels that were used in WW2. You can even relive some of this history as the castle holds plenty of interactive days!

Dover doesn't stop at the castle, however. In the town itself, just down the hill is The White Horse Inn, a Visit Kent award-winning pub that serves all the hearty food needed in winter to the light classics for summertime. Continuing further past the chains of Victorian townhouses is the brand new port area with a new pier out to sea, to admire the cruise ships and ferries sailing to France, which makes a fine mark to the end of your time exploring the local coastline of White Cliffs Country.



WELCOME

The spectator stands are up, the greens are manicured, and the eyes of the sporting world are getting ready to focus all their attention on the glorious Garden of England for one exceptional week of championship golf..

Yes, after a longer-than-expected build up, The 149th Open finally arrives to the Kent coastline this month, with all the action set to tee off at Royal St George's in Sandwich between 11th and 18th July.

Call us biased, but we can think of no better destination to welcome this prestigious event. With 14 Open Championships to its name, more than any other course outside of Scotland, it's safe to say Royal St George's has truly earned its place among the world's finest courses. Renowned for its stunning views across the Kent coast and those iconic white cliffs, the club has a long and distinguished history, even featuring as the setting for the match between 007 and Goldfinger in one of Ian Fleming's famed James Bond novels! And with those undulating fairways and tricky greens to master, The 149th Open promises to be just as nail-biting.

Beyond the greens, Kent has its own intriguing story to tell, with castles and cathedrals that have witnessed centuries of history, from murders and victories, to quarrelsome kings and queens, vineyards whose wines are lauded throughout the world, and a foodie heritage that has literally earned us the title of the Garden of England. Have we piqued your interest? Take a read of our 18 Reasons to Extend Your Golf Break in the Garden of England on page 51 and discover our Blue Flag beaches, cultural hotspots and iconic landmarks for yourself.

Once you've read all about the many things that make our county a fantastic spot for a short break, we know you'll be keen to hear about what makes it a world-class golf destination, so be sure to look at our

round up of The Best of Golf in Kent on page 63. If you didn't already know, you'll soon see our county is the proud home of three Open Championship hosts in White Cliffs Country - Royal St George's Golf Club, Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club and Prince's Golf Club. The east Kent coast also offers incredible links experiences atop of chalky white cliffs with views across the Channel. By contrast inland Kent with its rich, rolling countryside is the perfect backdrop to its heath land and parkland courses, including hosts of the Cazoo Classic, London Golf Club.

With all this and more to share, and as we prepare to welcome thousands of golf spectators to Kent, there couldn't be a better time to launch the very first Golf in Kent magazine. Whether you're watching the action from big screens by the coast, at home with a glass of Kent-brewed beer, or right at the heart of it at Royal St George's, we're excited to share our top tips to enrich your experience, from short break inspiration, to a behind-the-scenes peek at the incredible work that goes into designing our courses.

Remember to stay up to date with all the latest news and inspiration as it happens by following us on social at @GolfInKent, and if you're left yearning for yet more golf once the Claret Jug has been lifted this month, head straight on over to www.golfinkent.co.uk to get planning your next golf escape to the Garden of England.

From all of us at Sideways Media and Golf in Kent, here's to the long-awaited 149th Open!



MAP OF COURSES

STANDFIRST.....

1. Royal St George's Golf Club

Sandwich, CT13 9PB
www.royalstgeorges.com

2. London Golf Club

Stansted Lane, Ash, Nr Brands Hatch, TN15 7EH
www.londongolf.co.uk

3. Prince's Golf Club

Sandwich Bay, Sandwich, CT13 9QB
www.princesgolfclub.co.uk

4. Royal Cinque Ports

Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club - Golf Road, Deal, **Kent** CT14 6RF
www.royalcinqueports.com

5. Walmer & Kingsdown Golf Club

The Leas, Kingsdown, Deal, **Kent** CT14 8EP
www.kingsdowngolf.co.uk

6. North Foreland Golf Club

Convent Road, Broadstairs, CT10 3PU
www.northforeland.co.uk

7. Canterbury Golf Club

Scotland Hills, Littlebourne Road, Canterbury, CT1 1TW
www.canterburygolfclub.co.uk

8. Littlestone Golf Club

St. Andrews Road, Littlestone, New Romney, TN28 8RB
www.littlestonegolfclub.org.uk

9. Hever Castle Golf Club

Hever Castle Golf Club, Hever Road, Edenbridge, TN8 7NP
www.hevercastle.co.uk/golf

10. Leeds Castle Golf Club

Leeds Castle, Maidstone ME17 1PG
www.leeds-castle.com/golf



THE BEST OF GOLF IN KENT

Kent, the oldest county of England, has a rich history and longstanding tradition of the game of golf that dates back to over a century ago.

There are over 80 golf courses in Kent, which boast magnificent views of the county's picturesque, rolling landscape and orchards whilst its coastal courses offer dramatic, panoramic seascapes over the English Channel and the celebrated white chalk cliffs of Kent.

Thanks to Kent's varied terrain, it offers a range of golf breaks featuring premier championship links as well as a number of inland layouts, both downland and parkland tracks, set in lush, tranquil settings. Several of the golf courses in Kent were designed by revered golf course architects such as James Braid and Harry Colt whilst a host of delightful hidden gems add an element of surprise to Kent's array of courses.

Ready to get into the swing of golf in Kent? Read on to discover some of our county's very best courses...

London Golf Club

As a European Tour Destination and part of the IMG Prestige network, London Golf Club provides an oasis of golfing tranquillity in 700 acres of idyllic Kent countryside, just 20 miles from the Capital. The Heritage course is a Jack Nicklaus Signature design that bears all the hallmarks of the 18-time Major Champion. Host to the 2008 & 2009 European Open and the 2021 Cazoo Classic, the course provides an exhilarating test for golfers of all abilities.

The International course is pure downland and the quick undulating fairways force a links-style approach. Home of the 2014 Volvo World Match Play Championship and the 2018 & 2019 Staysure PGA Seniors Championship, this course proves a tough test for the most talented of golfers while providing the opportunity to shoot some great scores with a number of risk-reward holes.

Stansted Lane, Ash, Nr Brands Hatch, TN15 7EH
www.londongolf.co.uk

Prince's Golf Club

Prince's Golf Club boasts 27 holes of championship links in three 9-hole loops:

The Shore, The Dunes and The Himalayas. Each loop has its own unique characteristics that have recently benefited from substantial investment and redevelopment. An impressive array of 97 revetted bunkers, including the now-famous Sarazen Bunker, rolling greens and seaside breezes make for challenging golf.

Prince's also offers well-appointed apartment accommodation at The Lodge at Prince's and a modern, contemporary restaurant, Brasserie on the Bay, offering stunning views over Sandwich Bay, surrounding golf courses and beyond.

Sandwich Bay, Sandwich, CT13 9QB
www.princesgolfclub.co.uk



Royal Cinque Ports

Royal Cinque Ports

The Royal Cinque Ports Golf Club is a Members' Club with an 18-hole Championship Links golf course, regarded by many as one of the finest in the world. The Club also has excellent practice facilities, including a driving range, putting green, chipping green and pitching greens, and has been the scene of many Championships, including two Open Championships in 1909 and 1920.

Golf Road, Deal, CT14 6RF
www.royalcinqueports.com

Walmer & Kingsdown Golf Club

Perched on top of the world-famous White Cliffs of Dover, with sea views from every hole, this beautiful course delivers stunning views across the English Channel to the coast of France and was created by renowned course designer James Braid. Incorporating a sharp ridge and steep valley leading into the adjoining countryside, the superb condition and challenges of the course combined with the clubhouse facilities and stunning views deliver a memorable experience that ensures visitors return again and again.

The Leas, Kingsdown, Deal, Kent, CT14 8EP
www.kingsdowngolf.co.uk

North Foreland Golf Club

Established in 1903 in Broadstairs, North Foreland is steeped in history. Its elevated location above Kent's white cliffs ensures stunning panoramas of the English Channel and east Kent countryside from every hole. Broad fairways disguise a tricky layout where strategically-placed bunkers lie in wait whilst the layout also demands accurate, solid second shots in order to hold the greens. Testament to the quality of its championship course, North Foreland was chosen as one of the Final Qualifying Courses for The 2003 Open Championship.

North Foreland Golf Club, Convent Road, Broadstairs, CT10 3PU
www.northforeland.co.uk



North Foreland Golf Club



Hever Castle



Leeds Castle



Littlestone Golf Club

Canterbury Golf Club

Canterbury Golf Club opened in 1927 on 160 acres of land leased from the War Office. Designed by one of golf's greatest course architects, Harry Colt, few inland courses are able to match the variety and quality that Canterbury offers. Elevated tees, raised greens, steep climbs, sharp descents, twisting fairways and sloping lies are the features of this wonderful tree-lined layout.

Scotland Hills, Littlebourne Road, Canterbury, CT1 1TW
www.canterburygolfclub.co.uk

Littlestone Golf Club

Founded in 1888 and a little further west from the trio of Prince's, Royal St George's and Royal Cinque Ports, Littlestone is another wonderful, traditional championship links course laid out on naturally undulating land with its own range of sand dunes. Originally laid out by Laidlaw Purves, the course has a long and distinguished history, has hosted many major championships, and was chosen as a Final Qualifying Course for The 2011 Open Championship.

St. Andrews Road, Littlestone, New Romney, TN28 8RB
www.littlestonegolfclub.org.uk

Hever Castle Golf Club

Hever Castle is not only one of Kent's most iconic attractions, it is home to a 7,002-yard, par 72 championship parkland course, comprising the Kings and Queens 9-hole courses, as well as the nine-hole Princes Course that are complemented by a Tudor-style clubhouse. Testament to the quality of the championship course, the Kent Open and Kent PGA Championships have been staged at Hever in recent times, with the course also hosting a PGA EuroPro Tour event in 2010.

Hever Road, Edenbridge, TN8 7NP
www.hevercastle.co.uk/golf

Leeds Castle Golf Club

Set within rolling Kent countryside and less than an hour from London, Leeds Castle Golf Club is home to one of the county's most delightful nine holes of parkland golf and set against the backdrop of England's loveliest castle. The course layout continues to provide stunning views of the 900-year old Castle today, and combines vistas with challenging and spectacular holes from start to finish, providing an excellent test for golfers of all standards.

Leeds Castle, Maidstone, ME17 1PG
www.leeds-castle.com/golf

For more information on playing in the Garden of England, please [visit www.golfinkent.co.uk](http://www.golfinkent.co.uk).