

Tee party

Golfers should feel right at home in London, Edmonton, Jeddah and Sapporo, with each city boasting first-rate courses and an abundance of luxury accommodation options, as **Upward Curve** discovers



LONDON

With courses such as Highgate, Royal Blackheath, Stoke Park, St George's Hill, Walton Heath and Wentworth all within easy access of the city, London offers more than its fair share of world-class golf. Perhaps the pick of the bunch, however, is The Grove – a luxurious resort in Hertfordshire that is just 30 minutes from London's West End and Heathrow International Airport. While the historic mansion, which was formerly the home of the Earl of Clarendon, has been restored

into a 217-room five-star hotel, the property's grounds have been transformed into a 7,152-yard championship layout designed by the distinguished architect Kyle Philips (of Kingsbarns fame). The superb course perfectly fits with the quintessentially English parkland feel of the estate, with subtle bunkering and undulating greens, as well as lakes, streams and mature woods. Tiger Woods famously celebrated a memorable World Golf Championship victory here in 2006, while Barack Obama and then-British Prime

Minister David Cameron tackled the course together during the US President's UK visit earlier this year. From 13-16 October, The Grove is also hosting the 2016 edition of the European Tour's British Masters event, with the likes of former world number ones Luke Donald and Lee Westwood, and Olympic golf champion Justin Rose all teeing it up.

For overnight stays, The Grove offers 26 palatial Mansion House rooms and suites, hidden away in the heart of the resort's Grade II Listed building, as well as 191 modern rooms in the contemporary West Wing. For those looking to base themselves closer to London, however, the stunning 41 Hotel sits opposite the side entrance to Buckingham Palace, occupying an Edwardian building filled with original wood-panelling, glamorous, old-world rooms and suites and marble bathrooms.

WHERE TO STAY AND PLAY

The Grove

Tel: +44 (0) 1923 294 266
www.thegrove.co.uk

41 Hotel

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7300 0041
www.41hotel.com

EDMONTON

Canada's golf scene has been thriving in recent years, boosted by the on-going strength of the Canadian Open – which regularly attracts top players such as Jason

Day, Dustin Johnson and Bubba Watson – and the opening of stunning new courses around the country, such as Cabot Links and Cabot Cliffs in Nova Scotia.

While golfers often overlook Alberta in favour of other Canadian destinations, the province offers an array of top-class courses, particularly around its capital, Edmonton. Well worth a look for those visiting the city is the Royal Mayfair Golf Club, which hosted the Canadian Open in 1958 – the only time the country's national championship has been held in Alberta.

Established in 1922 and featuring a design by renowned Canadian architect Stanley Thompson, the par-71, 6,744-yard layout meanders its way through a scenic parkland setting, offering distant views of the Edmonton skyline.

After a regal golfing experience at Royal Mayfair, you won't feel out of place in the opulent surroundings of the Fairmont Hotel Macdonald. Situated in the heart of downtown Edmonton, this iconic property stands high on the bank ➤

Main: The Grove provides a stately setting for a round of golf on the outskirts of London
Inset: The 41 Hotel, which sits opposite the side entrance to Buckingham Palace, is one of the British capital's finest hotels





overlooking the largest urban parkway in North America – the North Saskatchewan River Valley – and offers classic elegance in its distinctive guestrooms, all within easy walking distance of the many of the wonderful sites and experiences that Edmonton has to offer.

WHERE TO STAY AND PLAY

Royal Mayfair Golf Club

Tel: +1 780 432 0066
www.mayfair.ca

Fairmont Hotel Macdonald

Tel: +1 780 424 5181
www.fairmont.com

JEDDAH

While the neighbouring United Arab Emirates has fully embraced golf, offering an abundance of world-class courses, the sport is still in its infancy in Saudi Arabia, which has only three 18-hole layouts in the country.

For many years, Jeddah's only options for golfers has been the sand-and-oil course at the Desert Lakes Golf Club, which has sandy 'browns' instead of greens and water hazards that are mere mirages. Those keen to hit the fairways while visiting the city, however, need only travel just over an hour north for a more traditional golfing test

at the Safaa Golf Club. Part of the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) campus – a private research university located in Thuwal – the beautifully maintained 9-hole course measures 3,575 yards and is fully flood lit, meaning visitors can tackle the par-36 layout in the cooler evening temperatures. There's also an all-grass driving range, two short game practice areas, a large putting green and an academy offering the latest video analysis technology.

The facilities are no less impressive at the Park Hyatt Jeddah – a luxury resort set amidst beautifully landscaped gardens on Jeddah's Southern Corniche. If you can tear yourself away from the infinity pool overlooking the Red Sea, or the three exclusive restaurants,



the hotel offers 142 elegant guestrooms and 15 suites, which seamlessly blend European architecture with touches of Andalusian design.

WHERE TO STAY AND PLAY

Safaa Golf Club

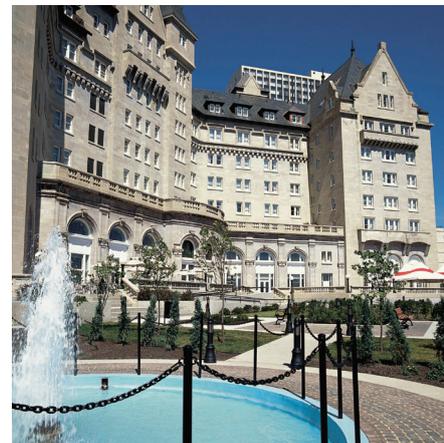
Tel: +966 12 808 6150
www.kaust.edu.sa

Park Hyatt Jeddah

Tel: +966 12 263 9666
jeddah.park.hyatt.com

SAPPORO

When it comes to sport, Sapporo is more famous for hosting the 1972 Winter Olympics than it is for its golf courses, but the Japanese city – the fourth most populous in the country and the largest on the northern island of Hokkaido – has much to offer the visiting golfer. In addition to Sapporo Golf



Club, which hosts the ANA Open on the Japan Golf Tour, and the picturesque Otaru Country Club, the Hokkaido Classic Golf Club is also well worth checking out. The Jack Nicklaus-designed course, which will host this year's Japan PGA Championship, is carved through a forest of oak trees on nicely rolling terrain just over an hour southeast of Sapporo. Featuring large fairway bunkers, narrow, well-guarded greens and huge lakes, the course is sure to test every element of your game.

Back in Sapporo, the JR Tower Hotel provides the perfect place to relax after your round. This new landmark luxury hotel occupies the upper floors of JR Tower, at the south entrance of Sapporo Station, and offers breath-taking views of the city, as well as four restaurants and a spa.

WHERE TO STAY AND PLAY

Hokkaido Classic Golf Club

Tel: +81 145 22 4101
www.hcgc.jp

JR Tower Hotel Nikko Sapporo

Tel: +81 11 251 2222
www.jrhotels.co.jp ■

Top: The Nicklaus-designed Hokkaido Classic Golf Club (left) and Edmonton's Fairmont Hotel Macdonald (right)

Left: Jeddah's Park Hyatt hotel