




From top: a bird's-eye view of the Anahita community on Mauritius's east coast; a multi-level villa design at Kilada in Greece



Sporting Sanctuaries

One unexpected side effect of the past year is that new homes at super-luxe golf destinations are becoming increasingly desirable – not only for holidays, but as primary residences, reports PETER SWAIN



A lifestyle revolution is quietly taking place. Many of those with the resources to choose how and where they live are prioritising personal wellness, recreational family time and biosecurity, preferably surrounded by green space. As working and even learning from home becomes the new norm, a prime beneficiary of this existential reset, right across the globe, is golf developments.

Every year, the European Tour's Road to Dubai reaches its climax on Greg Norman's Earth Course, surrounded by the palatial villas of **Jumeirah Golf Estates** (luxhabitat.ae). "Since the start of the pandemic, we've seen an extensive increase in demand for golf course communities," reports Alex Stern at Luxhabitat, Sotheby's UAE-based property-brokerage arm. "Living on a course adds value to a luxury home – not only do you get a fantastic view, space and idyllic neighbourhoods but someone else keeps it that way for you."

As Dubai prospers, fairway-side new-builds at JGE are proving ever more attractive. Underlining the trend, sales at North America's sole private, members-only ski and golf community, the super-exclusive **Yellowstone Club** (yellowstoneclub.com) in Montana, were up 150% in 2020. In uncertain times, developer Discovery Land Company is in tune with the zeitgeist. "We make life less complicated, more convenient and more fun," says founder and CEO Mike Meldman. "Some people bought a holiday home but have now discovered it's a genuine second home." Denizens in a range of exceptionally spacious residences enjoy a casual vibe, 100-plus ski runs, a Tom Weiskopf course and clubhouse cuisine helmed by celebrity chef Ming Tsai.

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The Right Address

Indoor-outdoor living with a majestic sea view at Costa Navarino in Greece



From left: inside a villa at Jumeirah Golf Estates in Dubai; straight down the fairway at Portugal's Quinta do Lago; sunset colours suffuse the clubhouse at Yellowstone Club in Montana



"Recent events have given people time to reflect on what's important to them, namely health, access to open space and, at a location like **Anahita** (sphereestates.com) on Mauritius, sea views and superb golf," agrees Robert Green of Sphere Estates. The Indian Ocean island has excellent telecommunications, and easy access to South Africa, the Middle East and India. "Most of our buyers are now looking to spend at least three months a year here, working from their holiday home, while enjoying the warmer climate, an Ernie Els course and on-site Four Seasons hotel amenities."

This transition from tourism to lifestyle economy is exemplified by **Makena Golf & Beach Club** (makenagolfandbeachclub.com) on the Hawaiian island of Maui. "Buyers from the US west coast as well as Japan and Australia take advantage of our mid-Pacific time zone," says VP Rick Tramontin. "They can start work at 6am and be on the beach or golf course by 2pm." With a family-friendly philosophy and an eye to sustainability, there's a light

environmental footprint here – another theme du jour. The 13 Maluaka oceanfront lots, ideal for legacy homes, are the jewels in this tropical crown, while the design of the Beach Club residences is Hawaiian contemporary.

The latest villas being offered at **Quinta do Lago** (quintadolago.com) in the Algarve are similarly sleek, although buyers face no stylistic architectural restrictions if building from scratch. This longtime Portuguese fixture on the European golf scene has three championship courses and five-star-resort credentials. San Lorenzo North has space for 26 properties, of which 16 plots have been sold and seven villas built so far. "We're seeing a significant increase in demand for clean, safe spaces, green living and low-density environments," reports QdL's Sean Moriarty. "The end of 2020 saw us double our sales in virgin plots – all golf-facing."

Across the Spanish border on the Costa del Sol, **La Zagaleta** (savills.com) is another exclusive gated community on wealthy buyers' radar this year. Just northwest of

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“The end of 2020
saw us double
our sales in
virgin plots”

Lounge by the
fireside with a
drink at Les Bordes
in France



Marbella and a short drive from Puerto Banús marina, grand mansions are set amid a 900ha country estate enjoyed by wild deer and golfers on two scenic courses. “Because people can run their business lives remotely and send their kids to the international school, 45-year-olds are now buying proper second homes here,” reports Hugo Thistlethwayte of Savills. “Really interesting people are moving in.”

The same can be said of **Les Bordes** (lesbordes.com) in the Loire valley, where the exclusive membership are now playing the brand-new Gil Hanse course as well as the older Robert von Hagge track. Under the Cour du Baron brand, this spring sees the launch of 48 homesites featuring a choice of traditional stone, timber and contemporary Michaelis Boyd-designed two- to six-bedroom houses. New sporting facilities and a village square will soon complement outstanding clubhouse amenities, the locale is a gastronomic destination of note, and Six Senses is converting the existing château into an 88-key hotel and spa. Six Senses is also involved in an embryonic residential scheme at the Antognolla club on the vine-clad slopes of Umbria in Italy.

Another Mediterranean newcomer, this one on the Peloponnese peninsula in Greece, **Kilada** (mykilada.com) is being developed by Dolphin Capital, which built the super-chic Amanzoe resort at Porto Heli nearby. A Jack Nicklaus Signature course is under construction, with a beach club and boutique hotel planned. Surrounded by olive groves, overlooking a picturesque Aegean fishing village, 90 scenic lots from 1,000 to 2,000 square metres are being released in the first phase, on which it is envisioned spacious modern villas with a classical Greek twist will be built. The amphitheatre at Epidaurus is one of many historic sites nearby.

On the western side of the same peninsula and already fully established, **Costa Navarino** (costanavarino.com) has two courses and two major hotel complexes, with two more José María Olazábal-designed 18-holers expected to open



From top: a private paradise at the Abama Resort in Tenerife; the Tom Doak-designed course at Chileno Bay in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, includes panoramic tee boxes; a well-appointed living room with a view at La Zagaleta in Spain



next year. Due for completion on the same timescale, the resort's latest real estate release features 42 bioclimatic, west-facing villas in the Rolling Greens neighbourhood overlooking the Ionian Sea, all with private pools, green roofs, smart-home automation and energy-saving technologies, aimed at owners looking for rental income through site developer Temes.

Aquatic attractions as well as two fine courses make **Sanctuary Cove** (coastal.com.au) on Australia's Gold Coast another internationally significant destination. "The gated resort is FIRB exempt, so anyone can buy without Australian residency," reports Glenys Pitkin of local agent Harcourts. Profiting from a world-class marina, shops and restaurants, 1,600 out of a possible 2,000 low-density residences have been built, including grand waterfront and fairway-side mansions. "It's a family-friendly community – children are free to roam as parents are confident they're always safe," says Pitkin. Good security is another theme of 2021.

Latin America's equivalent of the Gold Coast is Cabo on Mexico's Baja Peninsula, where the 485ha **Chileno Bay** (chilenobayclub.com) is currently making waves. This very private Sea of Cortez-side community has a Tom Fazio 18-hole masterpiece at its heart, more than three kilometres of coastline and a stratospherically high standard of sporting and dining options for owners of luxurious villas, casitas and contemporary oceanfront estates, sized from 280 to 1,200 square metres, to enjoy. Members have exclusive use of the spa, club and course, and can also access Auberge's stylish Chileno Bay Resort just along the beach.

Several other golf developments worldwide are particularly noteworthy. **The Abama Resort** (abamahotelresort.com) on Tenerife has a fine Dave Thomas course and a new release of 23 luxe turnkey villas close to the tennis centre. **Andermatt** (anderlatt-swissalps.ch) in the Swiss Alps, where owners enjoy fine skiing, golf and a Chedi hotel, has just launched two new apartment houses. And the elegant penthouses atop a new ten-storey complex at Rusutsu (rusutsu.com) – another ski and golf resort, this time on Hokkaido in Japan – are attracting interest from across east Asia.

More a sailing and golf destination, **Baker's Bay Golf & Ocean Club** (bakersbayclub.com) in the Bahamas is now back on its feet after hurricane damage and wowing all-comers. Equally hot, the 11 super-sized plots available at Marrakech's gated **Fairmont Royal Palm** (fairmont.com) have access to all the hotel's lavish facilities, while **Wentworth** (wentworthclub.com), the three-course private estate 20 minutes west of London, has seen record sales and prices over the past 12 months. When the going gets tough, it seems right now, the tough go golfing.

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