

FEATURE



Machrihanish Dunes Golf Club

New fractional offerings provide more opportunities to enjoy the first 18-hole links built on the west coast of Scotland in 100 years

By Tom Cunniff

Like surfers in search of the best waves, golfers will travel to the ends of the earth in search of the best course, and so it is with Machrihanish Dunes Golf Club. It may take Americans five hours or more to fly to Glasgow International, and then another three hours drive to the Mull of Kintyre and Machrihanish, but it's well worth every second. The site of a brand new links course—the first on Scotland's west coast in 100 years—that's routed through natural, grass-topped dunes along the Atlantic is something to behold.

Of course, playing it is even better. You'd swear it's been there for forever, or at least as long as its storied neighbor, Machrihanish Golf Club, which was designed by Old Tom Morris and dates to 1876. With views of the ocean on every hole, Machrihanish Dunes is one of the last natural links sites in the country that gave birth to the game.

Fittingly the architect was one of Scotland's own, David McLay Kidd, who designed Bandon Dunes, Tetherow and the Castle Course in St. Andrews. He found 23 natural golf holes and then chose the best 18, disturbing only seven of the 250 acres. The result is golf in its purest form. The tight, fescue turf allows for the quintessential Scottish bump-and-run game. Good thing, too, given some of the winds coming off the bay.

Of course, like any new layout there are always little things that need tweaking after some play, so Paul Kimber, who built the course with Kidd, recently returned to perform some renovations to make the course even more enjoyable. He moved the 8th green, for instance, about 50 yards closer to the fairway to reduce the approach shot's carry. This allowed him to shift the 2nd tee more inland to give golfers a better view of the fairway and ocean. He also widened fairways, reduced the severity of the secondary rough and softened some of the green contours. While the changes have helped make the course more playable, they haven't reduced any of the course's wonderful character. All its quirky, unpredictable charm remains.

Another new development at the club is the release of one-week fractional ownerships in the stunning two-bedroom seaside cottages on site. For about \$15,000, you can own a floating week each year in these casual elegant homes at one of golf's premier addresses. For more information, [click here](#).

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