

TEN MAGAZINE

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FIELDS OF DREAMS



The increasing popularity of golf in the region is bringing improved facilities. Latin American courses are becoming increasingly important on the world circuit.



In "Field of Dreams" Kevin Costner plays an Iowa farmer who obeys the dictate of a mysterious voice and builds a baseball diamond in the middle of his field, decimating his corn harvest, despite being on the verge of bankruptcy. The story of course ends happily, as Ray Kinsella, Costner's farmer, is not mistaken. Baseball legends turn up each night at the Field of Dreams to crack balls into the stands. Phil Alden Robinson, the director of the film, even allowed himself the luxury of adorning the story with the monumental and guttural James Earl Jones, who played a J.D. Salinger figure, under the guise of writer Terence Mann.

Many Latin American dreamers have imitated Costner, giving life to their own cinematic fields: magnificent, verdant golf courses nestled in stunning scenery. The demand is growing, driven by the notable performance of golfers like Mexico's Lorena Ochoa, the LPGA number one, or Angel Cabrera (winner of the 2007 US Open) and Andres Romero (Deutsche Bank), both from Argentina, and Colombia's Camilo Villegas, a young up-and-coming player.

And with increasing demand, the quality of courses needed to improve, to the extent that several have achieved international status. Among them are three designed by Jack Nicklaus, the best golfer of all time. Two are in Argentina --Chapelco Golf & Resort, in Patagonia, and Nordelta Golf Course, in Tigre, Buenos Aires province-- and one is in Mexico --Cabo del Sol - Ocean Course, in Baja California Sur. But there are also striking top-class designs in Colombia, Chile and Venezuela. And that is without mentioning the Dominican Republic, where the Cap Cana complex --another Nicklaus design, of course-- has already been included in the 2008 PGA Tour. "Bringing the Tour (to the region) is expensive, because of the prize money, but there are various courses where PGA tournaments could be played any time", says Francisco Aleman, golf specialist for ESPN, the sports news outlet. "Now, little by little, more will get built".

These are part of this BNamericas selection of 10 remarkable courses.

CAP CANA GOLF CLUB, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic

Jack Nicklaus built his first Golden Bear Lodge in the Dominican Republic and there he created his latest design, Cap Cana, consisting of three golf courses with 54 holes of varying complexity. Punta Espada, the first course designed by the Golden Bear, runs along a narrow stretch of coast. Fifteen of the 18 holes have a view of the Caribbean Sea. They say that the scenery is unparalleled and that players of all levels can overcome the obstacles of rocks and water hazards "They say this is Nicklaus' best design. <http://www.capcana.com>



Terravista Golf

CABO DEL SOL - OCEAN COURSE, Los Cabos, Baja California, México

Baja California Sur is the destination for holidaying American millionaires and Hollywood stars who come for the courses of Tom Weiskopf, Robert von Hagge, Robert Trent Jones II, Tom Fazio and, of course, Jack Nicklaus. The layout of the Ocean Course at Cabo del Sol (18 holes) --which Nicklaus called "the best golf property I have ever seen"-- extends over a mile of mountainous coast. It is accessible to all sorts of players. The fee for guests will be from US\$ 265 to US\$ 350 between October and June of 2008 and from US\$ 190 to US\$ 250 between July and September.

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BNamericas.com News

Pacific Rubiales (TSX: PRE), Petrominerales (TSX: PMG) and Gran Tierra Energy (Amex, TSX: GTE), all Canadian oil firms focused on Colombia, are planning to participate in the upcoming bid round for 168 new blocks, executives from the three companies said in a panel. Colombia's state hydrocarbons regulator ANH last year launched the 2010 open round, and bids are due on June 21. Pacific Rubiales' president Jose Arata said the company is currently analyzing the data package and affirmed that [...more](#)

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*For the Golden Bear, the 16th, 17th and 18th are the best three final holes in existence today.
<http://www.cabodelsol.com>

CASA DE CAMPO, La Romana, República Dominicana

Just along the road from the mansions of Julio Iglesias and Oscar de la Renta are two courses by the renowned Pete Dye. Teeth of the Dog, created more than 30 years ago beside the sea, features his trademark elevated greens. According to Golf Magazine it is the leading course in the Caribbean and one of the world's 35 most famous. And they say that the 12th and 15th holes of Dye Fore, the second course, are among the best par 3 on the planet. The menu is completed with The Links Course, with the tough challenge of its myriad lagoons and lakes.

*They say this is Nicklaus' best design. <http://www.casadecampo.com.do>

LAGUNITA COUNTRY CLUB, Caracas, Venezuela

These 18 holes are situated In El Hatillo, outside Caracas, and have played host to professional and amateur world championships. Venezuela's most important complex, it is steeped in tradition and has won international respect. La Lagunita hosts the continental Americas Tour tournament. It has been under threat since August 2006, when the Caracas Metropolitan Council, which has jurisdiction over El Hatillo, decreed the expropriation of its land.

*The greens are famous for always being in tip-top condition. <http://www.clublagunita.com>

TERRAVISTA GOLF, Bahia, Brasil

Located inside the local Club Med, among the ravines of Trancoso, it dominates the panorama of the southern coast of Bahia in the Brazilian north-east. The final leg of its 14th hole pits the putters against the sea breeze. US architect Dan Blakenship designed Terravista less than a decade ago. The course is played in two different environments: the outward nine holes run through Atlantic jungle undergrowth and humid heat; the inward nine are played along the beach. Four holes are situated directly on the edge of the ravine before it descends..



Chapelco Golf & Resort

*It is considered the best course in Brazil <http://www.terravistagolf.com.br>

PALMILLA GOLF CLUB, San José del Cabo, México

Part of the One&Only Palmilla Resort complex, another Nicklaus project, designed in a resort frequented by the Californian artistic crowd. With a view of the Cortés Sea, the ocean winds make play complex, although it can be tackled by golfers of all handicaps. The course is divided into Arroyo Nine, Mountain Nine and Ocean Nine. Nicklaus completed the Ocean Nine (3,527 yards) with an elevation of more than 200 meters between the 1st and 6th holes. The Arroyo, which extends 3,337 yards, is notable for its 6th, 7th and 8th holes. Meanwhile, the 470 yards that comprise the par three 4th hole of the Mountain Nine (3,602 yards) are the delight of long-hitters.

*A demanding course, because of the terrain and the wind. <http://www.palmillaresort.com>

EL RINCÓN DE CAJICÁ, Bogotá, Colombia

This is the work of Robert Trent Jones, who designed more than 500 courses in almost 40 countries. Cajicá hosted the 1980 World Cup, as well as more than a dozen professional and amateur tournaments. Because of the course's altitude (2,655 metros above sea level), compensation has been made to allow for the greater speed and flight of the ball. This resulted in a 7,542-yard course, with 210-yard par threes and 440-yard par fours, specifications that would be impossible at sea level. Golf Magazine considers it among the best in the world.

Play becomes more complex at high altitude. <http://www.elrincon.com.co>

CHAPELCO GOLF & RESORT San Martín de los Andes, Neuquén, Argentina

Inaugurated in 2004, this 18-hole course (par 72) was designed by Jack Nicklaus, together with his son, Jack Nicklaus II, in the midst of a striking Andean landscape. Nicklaus himself chose the genetic strain of the grass for his first Argentine course from the leading US seed banks. Built to USGA regulations, it has 73 tees and 65 sand bunkers, while its driving range and putting green were designed to take advantage of the panoramic view.

*The quality of construction and materials make this one of the best courses in Latin America.
<http://www.chapelcogolf.com>

NORDELTA GOLF COURSE Buenos Aires, Argentina

Nicklaus' second course in Argentina, it was inaugurated in August and forms part of the urban development of millionaire property magnate Eduardo Constantini. It is the best designed course in Buenos Aires. With 18 holes (par 72), the course is 7,050 yards long and demands as much precision as strength. Nicklaus himself reckons that the 2nd and 3rd holes are the most challenging. The green at the first is preceded by a lake and the third requires a long drive to clear 200 yards of water.

<http://www.nordelta.com>

LAS BRISAS DE SANTO DOMINGO Santiago, Chile

This 12 year-old course was designed by Gage Davis & Associates. Its 36 holes have been completed in the style

and to the standards of US courses. Las Brisas' greens have important gradients and its fairways are dotted with promontories and depressions. Crossed by five artificial lagoons on a 128- hectare site, it is a complex course, which recent beginners often find demanding.

*The occasional winds can make handling the fairways and greens tricky. <http://www.golfasbrisas.cl>

THE TOP TEN	
The best golf courses in Latin America, according to our readers*	
Cabo del Sol - Ocean Course (Mexico)	27%
Las Brisas de Santo Domingo (Chile)	24%
Terravista Golf (Brazil)	9%
Cap Cana (R.D.)	9%
Nordelta Golf Course (Argentina)	7%
Lagunita Country Club (Venezuela)	6%
Palmilla Golf Club (México)	6%
Chapelco Golf & Resort (Argentina)	5%
El Rincón de Cajica (Colombia)	4%
Casa de Campo (R.D.)	3%

*Online survey, November-December, 2007

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Francesco Sinibaldi

Christmas carol. Shining lights and the plan of a destiny, when Christmas arrives: I see the profile of a northerly wind near the sound of a feast, arosy return and always a white dream on a similar sight. Francesco Sinibaldi

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