



# STAY AND PLAY

South Africans are spoilt for choice for golfing holidays. Here's a guide to help you plan your next trip

BY BEN KARPINSKI

We all know South Africa offers great value for money, tremendous year-round weather and a beautiful diversity of world-class courses. Another big factor at play for local rounds is the quality of stay-and-play golfing options linked to our top courses.

No matter where you are touring from, domestically or internationally, being able to arrive at a destination and truly treat it as a base has a genuine appeal.

This month's is by no means an exhaustive review, as there are many options out there in the various provinces that can fit into a vast range of tastes and budgets. For a general view we are going to list some stand-outs across three types of 'stay and play' categories.

## YOUR FAVOURITES

What have been some of your favourite stay-and-play destinations in South Africa?

We would love to hear about your experiences in this regard, especially if they are not mentioned here.

Connect with us on our social media channels about this below:

Instagram - [@thegolfmagza](#) • TikTok - [@thegolfmagsa](#) • Facebook - [@TheGolfMag](#) • X - [@thegolfmag](#)

**ALWAYS WORTHWHILE:**

- Fancourt
- **Simola**
- Pezula
- Oubaai
- Pinnacle Point
- Pearl Valley
- Arabella
- Zimbali
- Champagne Sports
- Wild Coast
- Sun City

## TRIED AND TESTED

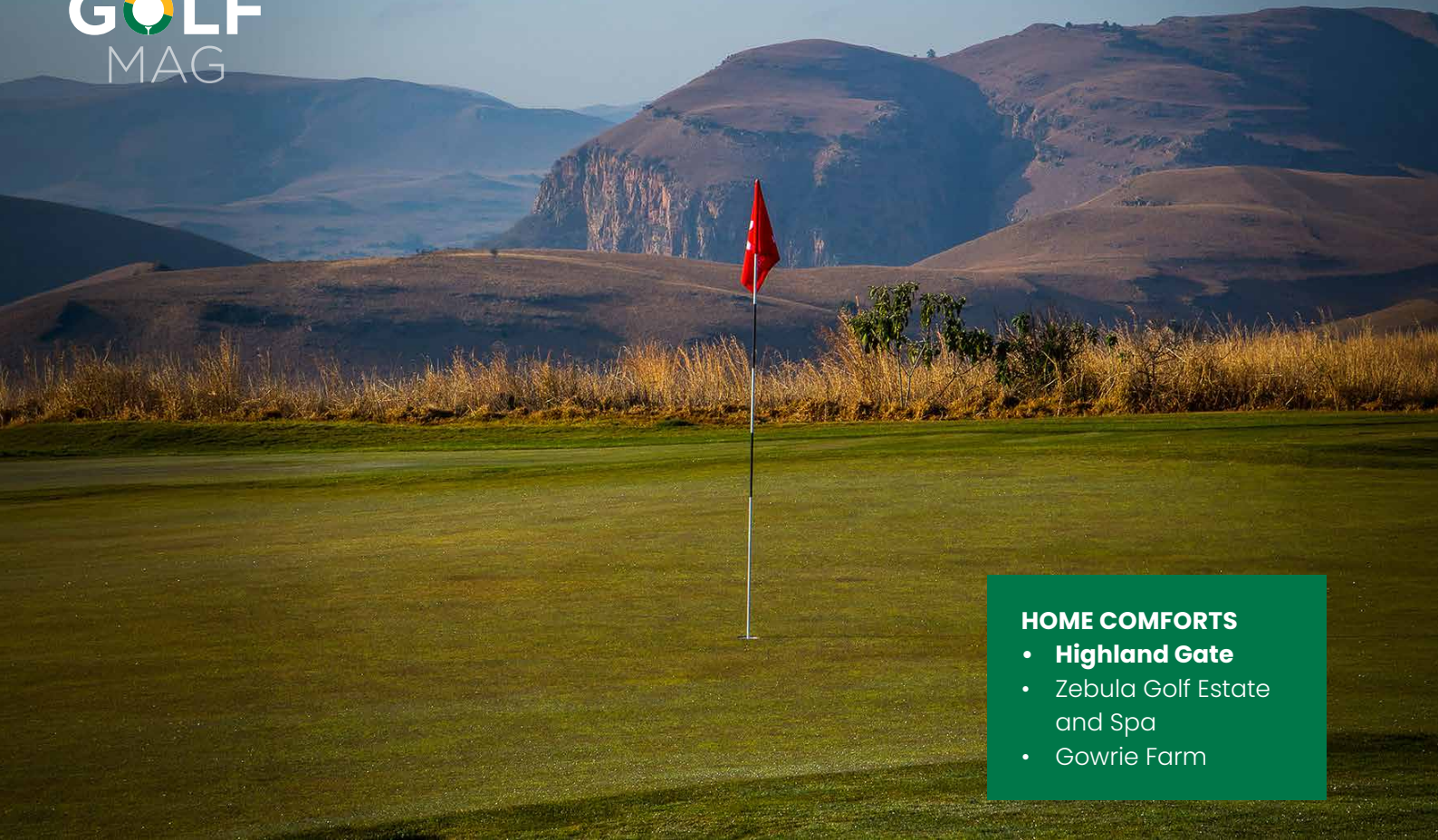
We all know which ones fall into this category – the big drawcards for traditional tours. With these mostly consisting of hotels, the following largely fall into the top-tier budgets, but certainly have everything you would ever need ... and more.

Naturally many of the Garden Route's main golfing hubs appear here as the region has established itself as the number one touring destination in South Africa.

KwaZulu-Natal as a region continues to grow in stature with Champagne Sports, Zimbali and the Wild Coast being the stand-outs in South Africa's broadest and most diverse golfing regions.

Top of the list in the Cape Winelands and beyond are Pearl Valley and Arabella. Spectacular in every sense and providing a terrific base to explore your surrounding attractions.

Then of course you have the resort of Sun City in the North West Province. With two superb Gary Player-designed courses, and everything you would need linked to them for any kind of a tour, it's a destination everyone has to visit at least once.



#### HOME COMFORTS

- **Highland Gate**
- Zebula Golf Estate and Spa
- Gowrie Farm

## HOME FROM HOME

For some, a tour is about feeling at home, or being in a place that is more suited for bigger groups. The places in this category offer freedom to personalise the trips a little more, enjoy a lekker braai, or allow for more family time along with the golf.

Being only three hours from Johannesburg, Highland Gate has become a popular golfing getaway destination in recent years. Known for their golf villa options, it creates an ultimate stay-and-play option on an estate that provides a comprehensive base with restaurant facilities too.

Zebula Golf Estate and Spa is an even more entrenched option in this regard. Everyone at the very least knows someone up country that has enjoyed a weekend here, and with its close proximity to Elements Golf Reserve, you have the additional option to play there as well.

A destination that continues to grow in this category is Gowrie Farm in the KZN Midlands. Along with their traditional hotel accommodation attached to their homely clubhouse, they have also recently launched the The Crofts. Nine stand-alone, two-bedroom units that have access to an additional central events building. It's the perfect purpose-built addition to the course, offering golfers space and flexibility.



#### **HIDDEN GEMS**

- Sabi River Sun
- Umdoni Park (Botha House)
- **Olivewood**

## **LESSER KNOWN GEMS**

Many may argue that the Sabi River Sun is very much a tried-and-tested destination. For those unfamiliar with the Lowveld though, it's still somewhat lesser known as the course itself isn't seen as a 'top 100' sort of offering. It is however a more than playable 18-hole course, and as a base offers premium accommodation on a beautiful scenic property that also acts as a natural gateway to the Kruger National Park.

Umdoni Park may not be the most natural stay-and-play choice in KwaZulu-Natal. However, the iconic Botha House on the property accommodates up to 22 guests in the most unique of traditional settings. Linking you to nearby Selborne Golf Estate and the rest of the South Coast golfing options from there.

The Eastern Cape is another emerging region for genuine stay-and-play offerings. A great example of this is the Olivewood Private Estate and Golf Club. Their fun and picturesque 18 holer aside, a stay here, just 30 kilometres outside East London, links you to a variety of coastal activities in one of the country's most natural of settings.



#### HOME COMFORTS

- **Highland Gate**
- Zebula Golf Estate and Spa
- Gowrie Farm

## KZN IS CALLING

As we move into the winter months here in South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal in general is the perfect destination to explore the stay-and-play option. There are a variety of tours to consider, starting from Champagne Sports en route to the Midlands from Gauteng, to Prince's Grant up on the North Coast, all the way down to the Wild Coast on the extreme South Coast.

The weather is sunny and conducive to short sleeves and shorts; it isn't quite as busy as the summer months (outside of school holidays); and it is still lush and playable, unlike other parts of the country that experience greater contrast during the winter months.

There are many amazing places to tour in the golfing world, but before you consider the Scottish Links, playing the pearls of Portugal's Algarve region, or the island delights of Mauritius a little closer to home, have a think about what lies right on our doorstep.

You will never regret doing so.

SUNSHINE TOUR | FACEBOOK.COM