

Golf and castles in Mid and North Wales

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We were planning a golf trip to Wales for a longer period of time. Several months ago we have seen on the German TV a very interesting documentary on castles in Wales, which contributed to our final decision to combine golf and culture-castles in Wales. A classic links experience is for us, as for many serious golfers, simply the best golf. We have selected four golf courses in Mid and North Wales out of 75 golf courses – Aberdovey, Royal St Davids, Conwy and Holyhead and visited several castles.



Aberdovey golf course with its classic layout between the dunes and railway is really a must if considering playing golf in Wales (included in the UK top 100 course). Three of the legendary architects of the early 20thC Colt, Braid & Fowler have all had a hand in shaping Aberdovey as it stands today. Aberdovey is included in the James

Braid Trail (jamesbraidtrail.co.uk). Hole 12 is one of the hardest on the course, included in the 18 most iconic holes in Wales. Unfortunately, it is now under reconstruction and much shorter. As a great deal you can experience Aberdovey after 4:00pm, a green fee representing only £25 per person (regular green fee £64,50). The Dormy Accommodation, already rated as 4-star by Visit Wales, offers for £125 per person, 2 rounds of golf and one night's bed & breakfast. www.aberdoveygolf.co.uk.



Our visit of Caernarfon, Conwy and Beaumaris - the trio of medieval fortresses, all UNESCO World Heritage Sites, started in Caernarfon Castle. Edward I began the construction of this fantastic fortress and of Caernarfon's town walls in 1283. It was intended to be an administration centre as well as a stronghold. From

several of the eight angular towers we enjoyed breathtaking views over Caernarfon and the Menai Strait to Anglesey. After the visit of the Caernarfon Castle we had for sure the best dinner during our entire stay in Wales in the Black Boy Inn in Caernarfon, very close to the castle.



Royal St Davids Golf Club is located in the town of Harlech, in Gwynedd. The golf club was established in 1894. Royal St David's is indeed royal. Edward VII gave the club his patronage and Edward VIII captained the club in 1934 whilst he was Prince of Wales. The course is rated 43rd in Golf World's Top 100

Courses in Britain & Ireland and 42nd in Golf Monthly's Top 100 in the UK & Ireland.



The golf course is in a beautiful setting in a most beautiful coastal location within Snowdonia National Park, lies beneath the gaze of the magnificent Harlech Castle. Dormy facility which will accommodate up to eight golfers at £40 per person per night, including breakfast is also available. Green fee rate - £65.00 one round

or £85.00 per day during summer. There are several golf packages available, for instance package 1 - one night's stay in dormy accommodation, including full Welsh breakfast & 1 round of golf - £75 (Winter)/£95 (Summer). www.royalstdavids.co.uk.

Another World Heritage Site and one of the Wales' most famous castles Harlech was built in the period 1283-1289 by Edward I. The secret weapon of the castle: stairway running from the castle to the cliff base providing access to the sea. We admired this castle during our play on the Royal St Davids links from several holes.



As the next castle we have climbed to Criccieth Castle with twin-towered gatehouse built between 1230 and 1240. Criccieth may come from the Welsh words “crug caeth” meaning the jail on the hill. The top of the hill offers beautiful views of Snowdonia.

Conwy Golf Club is a wonderful course and offers stunning views. In all probability golf was first played on Welsh soil when three enthusiastic Scotsmen laid out a few roughly made holes on a spur of land known as the Morfa in 1869. It was not until 1875 that a group of members from the Royal Liverpool Golf Club realised the full potential of the area and had a professionally-designed course laid out by their club professional, Jack Morris,



nephew of Old Tom Morris. Conway (Caernarvonshire) Golf Club was officially formed on the 30th June, 1890 and is the third oldest club behind Tenby (est. 1888) and Rhyl (March 1890). The course is a super test but is playable for all standards. We appreciated great golf and also watched the nearby air show. Green

fees: M/T £45.00, W/Th/Sun £50.00, F/Sat. £57.00, per round. www.conwygolfclub.com.

Conwy Castle was built for Edward I by Master James of St George with astonishing speed – begun in 1283, Conwy Castle and town walls were effectively complete by 1287. Visitors can climb several towers and turrets and visit the royal apartments in the inner ward. These are the most intact set of residential buildings left by the medieval English monarchy in Wales. The smallest House in Great



Britain is located very close to Conwy Castle.



The last golf course on our list was the Holyhead Golf Club - 18 holes heathland on the scenic Isle of Anglesey. James Braid designed the layout in 1912. The fairways are extremely narrow and quite



undulating. The par 3 2nd green is on the top of a hill - guarded by a bunker on the left and a cliff edge at the right. Green fees: weekday full day: £40.00, single round: £35.00. Weekend & Bank Holidays Full Day: £45.00, single round: 40.00. Dormy house package from £60 per person comprising of:

18 holes of golf in the afternoon of arrival, dinner, bed & breakfast and 18 holes of golf the following morning. www.holyheadgolfclub.co.uk.





Edward I began building Beaumaris in 1295, and in the first year around 450 masons, 400 quarrymen and 2 000 labourers worked there and works continued until around 1330, but the castle was never completed. A series of deadly obstacles protected the entrance into the castle. Like murder holes, arrowloops and portcullis grooves in the walls. After the visit of chapel we climbed to the top wall-walk for beautiful views of Snowdonia. At high tide, ships could sail into the castle dock and unload supplies directly.

For more information concerning castles in Wales please visit www.cadw.wales.gov.uk.

Good news: Isle Of Anglesey Golf Pass – for only £79! A great saving and a perfect Christmas Gift. Play 5 rounds of golf at any of the 6 courses on the Island.

On the Isle of Anglesey on the way back to the airport in Liverpool we had a short stop in the village



with the longest name in Europe and finally purchased in the nearby Brynsiencyn the famous salt instead of other souvenirs. Seventeen years ago, sea salt by leaving a saucepan of Anglesey seawater to bubble away on the ancient Aga in a family kitchen was born - Halen Môn. Today, Halen Môn remains a family company. It is

believed that this is the best sea salt money can buy with Protected Designation of Origin status.

We were really lucky during our 7-day stay in Wales, during our golf rounds on famous links fairways and greens there was no rain and pairing golf with visit of famous castles represents in our opinion a very good combination which can be recommended to golfers visiting Wales.