



EVIAN RESORT LE MANOIR DU GOLF

Learning the game in the purest place on earth. PICTURES AND STORY BY DAVID J. WHYTE

Standing on the precipitous northern edges of the Alps is a golf resort nestled between the snow-capped mountains and glassy Lake Geneva. Evian Resort is an integral part of the village of Evian-les-Bains. A fleet of shuttle buses ferry guests between the resort's two hotels, golf course, golf academy, tennis courts and casino.

This is also home to the famous Evian mineral water. They arrive via bubbling springs high up in their Alpine fortitude and flows straight towards the Evian Water Bottling Plant creating perhaps the finest and purest mineral water on the planet. And here's an interesting fact: it takes two hours to mountain bike from the base of the Chablais Massif mountain range to town but the spring water needs 200 years to make the same journey.

Hôtel Royal is the grand dame and has been

in operation since the late 1800's. It is currently completing a major renovation and will reopen in all its completed glory this summer. Its sister Hôtel Ermitage, is a 4-star with the qualities of five. It offers superb service and comfortable rooms with incomparable views over the lake.


This area is purpose-built for a healthy lifestyle. Close to the Alps, skiing through the winter is popular. And during summer, sparkling Lake Geneva offers water as well as outdoor activities from rafting to mountain biking. From Evian, day trips to nearby Lausanne, Yvoire, Chamonix, or Montreux are possible.

LE MANOIR DU GOLF

Surrounded by a driving range and a 4-hole practice course, Le Manoir du Golf looks like a small hotel. You can

in fact hire its seven elegant bedrooms and suite. Housing a golf academy that boasts one of the finest facilities in the continent, the 37-acre plot offers a covered driving range that is strategically placed at various locations to replicate different types of shots on the golf course.

Taking practice to another level, its short 4-hole course lets students perfect their groundwork before hitting the full 18. Here, there are three flags on each green to practice different types of approaches. Le Manoir du Golf in Evian presents eight specific training programs that are directed towards real situations on a real golf course. It's a progressive system designed to help players of every level improve and ingrain what they learn.

Access to the academy is free of charge for guests of Hôtel Royal, Hôtel Ermitage or Le Manoir du Golf. 





TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

BY PATRICK TERRU, PROFESSIONAL AT EVIAN ACADEMY



PATRICK TERRU

“I am a great believer in self-discovery. Self-discovery in any sport is the most powerful tool a player can grasp. A teacher brings you something of value in each lesson but your own feedback is priceless. It's not the teacher's hands on the club; it's yours. It's all about your own feedback and what you learn from it.

I like to make things really simple for students here at Le Manoir. This is just a game and you already know how to play it. I'm serious when I tell my students, "You already know how to do it!"

Here's an example. You know the difference between hitting the top of the golf ball or reaching the ground too early and how that feels. So which part of the ball would you aim at? The bottom. And that's really all the information you need. You should slide the club head underneath the ball and allow the club and its built-in

design to make it fly. Just know that simple fact and your body and brain will take care of the rest.

Another area people get caught up in is looking for perfection in their golf swing, something which is impossible. Our brain does not understand the idea of doing things perfectly so we should not ask it to achieve perfection. It is unnatural and ultimately ends in failure and disappointment. 'Perfect' should not be a goal, no matter what level you play at. By holding the club well, maintaining good posture and making a rhythmic swing you then let your body and brain perform what they naturally do.

SWING TIPS

DYNAMIC SEQUENCE

Everyone has a different physique and this obviously

has its effects. Look at Jim Furyk for instance or Bubba Watson. The golf swing is still however an athletic move requiring the ability to deliver a dynamic sequence. There are four segments within that sequence; the hips, the leading arm, the hands and the golf club - in that order. This is the sequence of all good players and one you should work towards in a full swing. It is worth noting that in the short game, it is more club first, then arms, shoulders and hips. This helps to control power and distance.

TARGET PRACTICE

Learning to have a good posture is important, a decent grip is important. But nothing is more important than aiming properly. Golf is a target game so always practice with a target in mind. People concentrate on their swing too much during practice when they should be targeting. You should stare at the target and only glimpse the golf ball, not the other way around. Reprogram your neuro-system by staring at the target on the practice ground, then on the golf course. Pick a definite target and stare at it for three or four seconds. You'll find a marked improvement in results.

LIE ANGLE

The club head has a sole and a purpose. It has been designed to work in a certain way and the more we understand and apply this, the better we'll hit the ball. The lie angle is a factor that dramatically affects the

accuracy of the shot. It is perfect when the sole arrives at impact parallel to the ground. This is a very good reason to have your clubs properly fitted but it is also a good swing thought to have as you address and swing through the ball.

CLUB ANGLE

Golf is a game of angles and one of the most important is the angle of the club at address and at contact. The driver's angle is different from the iron but you should accommodate that naturally because of the length of the shaft. What you should be aware of is the angle of the clubhead in relation to the club head. In general, the shaft should angle slightly forward. Again you are using the club in the way it has been designed and you need to return the shaft and club head back to this position at impact to deliver the club head properly to the ball.

HOW TO PRACTICE

Finally I want to say something about the way you practice. The game is random on the golf course where you hit a different shot every time. If you block practice i.e. empty a full bucket with a 7-iron as I see many people do, you are often practicing and ingraining bad habits. You should change the club every four or five golf balls. Aim at different targets and create fluidity to your practice rather than rigidity. In other words practice as you play. 🏌️‍♂️

TOP PICTURES FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Dynamic Sequence; Target Practice; Lie Angle; Club Angle.

EVIAN RESORT GOLF COURSE

Pure and simple, the Evian course offers fun challenges to all levels of play.



Perched on the hillside between mountain and lake and commanding magnificent views in either direction, the Evian course weaves through wooded hillside on three different tiers. But there are no strenuous climbs as most of the holes are relatively flat playing along sun-kissed terraces.

At just over 6,500 metres, it is not a long course; nor is it difficult but it presents a balanced challenge, ideal certainly for the LPGA's Evian Championship and for golfers of all levels. Standing on the tee, the main challenge on most holes is psychological. Faced with seemingly narrow landing areas, in practice there's more room out there than you envisage.

The 1st and 2nd are good examples, a tight start but a good introduction to the nature of the track. All along fairways are narrow, lined with trees and rich, thick rough meaning going offline is punishable and costly. Playing for position rather than length is more advantageous and perhaps this is why the course is so well-suited for the Ladies tour.

The signature hole 5 offers heart-warming views. To the north is Lake Geneva with the town of Lausanne glinting on the opposite shore whilst behind the green is a fabulous vista of Dent d'Oche, the highest summit of the Chablais Massif at 2,221 metres (7,287 feet) in altitude. Back to the hole, two new lakes have been added to this uphill par 3 to concentrate the mind on hitting a solid, fully committed shot.

It is interesting to note as the course unfolds, there are typical slopes towards the lake on the fairways - but not the greens. All 18 have been completely rebuilt with emphasis put into movement. The end result is impressive. This is perhaps the course's main defense; they are large and capable of offering at least five pin positions over gently moving ground. If the greens are not at tournament speed, they are harrowing to putt on. Indeed players on the LPGA Tour, consider Evian's greens the most difficult on the circuit.

On the 16th is a little par 3 whose narrow green can send bad shots into the water. Pin position makes a difference here but the lack of depth to the green always makes it tricky. The closing four holes have been dubbed the 'Evian Puzzle' offering a series of hillocks to negotiate.

Here, there are no flowers or fancy furniture - just straightforward golf the way nature intended. And, of course, it is ecologically 100 percent pure. ♻️

www.evianresort.com
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