

Golf in Scotland: Five modern courses you must play



Kingsbarns Golf Links

The 15th hole at Kingsbarns Golf Links skirts the North Sea.



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Every golf traveler has his favorite classic historical courses in Scotland, but what about all the modern gems?

While some golf snobs only prefer the classics, they're missing a lot by not teeing up at some of Scotland's newest masterpieces, which actually look and feel like they've been around for a century or two.

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[Kingsbarns \(http://www.kingsbarns.com\)](#)

This golf course wasn't built, it was discovered, so to speak. Opened in 2000, Kingsbarns looks as if it's been quietly sitting off the coast of the North Sea for 200 years. This parcel of land oozes with history. The bridge (built in the 1700s) on the 18th green was actually found by the construction crew and over the years people have uncovered many ancient fossils on this links land. From start to finish, this course flows with grace and tranquility and is simply a beautiful place to play golf and spend four hours or more. It sits only a few miles away from the most popular golf course in the world, the Old Course.

[Trump International Golf Links \(http://www.trumpgolfsotland.com\)](#)

Love him or despise him, Donald Trump has built a magnificent golf course on the most beautiful piece of land 20 minutes outside Aberdeen. Recently opened, the course will need a few years to fully mature. With a wonderful design and beautiful panoramas on almost every hole, this course is a great experience right now. Donald Trump calls it the "world's greatest golf course". Strong words from "The Donald", but we suggest you should find out for yourself if he's on the mark with his assessment.

[Machrihanish Dunes \(http://www.machrihanishdunes.com\)](#)

Machrihanish Dunes is set overlooking the Atlantic Ocean and they call it the "world's most natural golf course." Since its opening in 2009, visitors have experienced a reincarnation of Old Tom Morris. The layout challenges the player to be creative, something that is unique to many Morris designs. This course feels old, with black sheep wandering across the links land and tall wispy grass challenging your every shot.

[St. Andrews Castle Course \(http://www.standrews.com/play/courses/the-castle-course\)](#)

The most recent addition to the St. Andrews Links Trust is the Castle Course which opened in 2008. Picture yourself playing golf on a gorgeous links course with the city of St. Andrews as a stunning backdrop and a steady breeze coming off the bay.

[Castle Stuart \(http://www.castlestuartgolf.com\)](#)

Opened in 2009, Castle Stuart is known for its imaginative layout in the Highlands of Scotland. Overlooking the Beaulieu Firth, the course is ruggedly attractive with its rumple fairways and pot bunkers. Home to the last few Scottish Opens, this course has some of the most dramatic views in Scottish golf. The first and 10th will blow you away as they sit right on the water's edge, giving you the perfect opportunity to, well, deposit your shot in the ocean. One unique aspect is the "infinity edge" design on several greens, which highlight many of the landmarks in the area.

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