

GOLF TOURISM AWARDS: WHO IS THE BEST?



Popularity of golf is growing worldwide. There are new golf courses mushrooming all over our planet, which gives golf players a unique opportunity to connect vacation abroad with playing golf. This is why the global golf tourism is on the rise.

The International Association of Golf Tour Operators is a global trade organization for the golf tourism industry that controls over 80 % of golf holiday packages sold worldwide (outside of Asia). The IAGTO is naturally well aware of the industry's potential and therefore it organizes the IAGTO Awards. These are given to exceptional "players" in the golf tourism industry. The 2009 gala Awards evening took place on Thursday 20th November 2008 on the last day of the International Golf Travel Market in Spain. The awards went to three world's leading Golf Resorts and to a destination in each of these five regions: Asia & Australasia, Africa and the Indian Ocean & the Gulf States, Latin America & the Caribbean, North America, Europe. There is also the Honorary Award for an individual, which was this year given to a Spanish professional golfer, José María Olazábal.

The Golf Resort of the Year for **Europe** is Le Meridien Dona Filipa & San Lorenzo Golf Course. **Northern American** Resort of the Year is Doral Golf Resort & Spa in Miami and the third winner is **Jamaican** resort Half Moon.

The Golf Destinations of the Year are Dubai, New Zealand, Andalucia (Spain), Dominican Republic and South Carolina. There is also an award in the category "Undiscovered Golf Destination", which was given to Kenya. The country has a 100-year golf history and it can offer as much as 40 golf courses.

The awards are meant to support the public private cooperation in the development of golf possibilities. The goal is also to promote already existing destinations and make them accessible to the widest range of golfers.

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