

THORNDON PARK
Essex

In a county not blessed with well-known courses, this delightful Colt/Alison creation from 1920 is almost universally regarded as the finest by those in the know. The back nine encompasses the front, and the short holes especially are both strong and very attractive. Just minutes from the M25, it's a genuine oasis running through an expansive park laid out by Capability Brown. The course is currently undergoing a major bunker renovation that will not only improve the whole visual and strategic impact, but also serve to cement its reputation.

W: thorndonpark.com

GF: Round: £80wd/£95we



DONEGAL
County Donegal

A firm favourite in the *Golf Monthly* Next 100, the beautifully located course at Murvagh is blessed with an idyllic setting along Ireland's spectacular north-west coastline. The result of this is that there are wonderful views all the way – some out and over the sea, others inwards towards the mountains and over the beautiful bay. The front nine runs in an anti-clockwise loop that encircles the back nine, and the Eddie Hackett design was subsequently upgraded by the great Pat Ruddy. Donegal is both scenic and a fine test of golf all the way.

W: donegalgolfclub.ie

GF: Round: €120



BEST OF UK & IRELAND

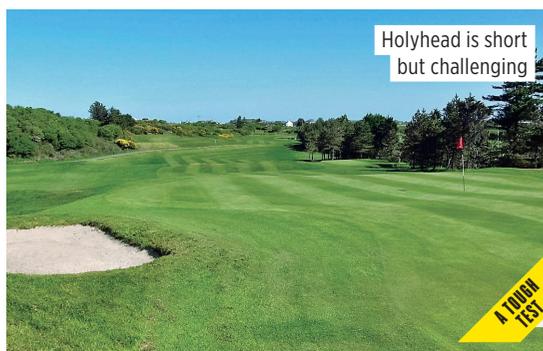
Wonderful settings abound in this month's whirlwind golfing tour

EYEMOUTH
Berwickshire

Just five miles to the north of the Scotland/England border, the course at Eyemouth was completely transformed when it was expanded from nine to 18 holes just over 20 years ago. It can perhaps now be best described as a parkland/cliff-top hybrid with an element of links thrown in for good measure. There are wonderful views and it is also blessed with a most spectacular par 3, the 6th. Just 167 yards from the championship tee, it is played over a deep, rocky inlet that is as dramatic and magnetic as they come.

W: eyemouthgolfclub.co.uk

GF: Round: £30wd/£35we;
Day: £45wd/£50we



HOLYHEAD
Gwynedd

To the north-west of Wales is beautiful Anglesey, and to its north-west is lovely Holy Island on which is located the James Braid heathland design at Holyhead. Narrow fairways are flanked by heather, gorse and bracken, so despite its relatively modest length of just over 6,000 yards from the tips, it plays every inch. In the distance Snowdonia is a handsome backdrop, and the exposure to the Irish Channel – next stop Dublin – means that wind is usually a factor. With five short holes and four par 5s, there is also plenty of variety.

W: holyheadgolfclub.co.uk

GF: Round: £35wd/£40we;
Day: £40wd/£50we

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