

Date: January 2017

Title: Square Mile

square mile

SQUAREMILE.COM

24 ISSUE 119 ISSN 2397-3439
9 771122 920251
1 1 1



THE
E-SPORTS
REVOLUTION
GEORGE
FOREMAN
THE WORLD'S
BEST
HEALTH
RESORTS
BEN
AINSLIE

CASEY AFFLECK

EXCLUSIVE THIS YEAR'S TOP OSCAR CONTENDER OPENS UP ABOUT HIS OBSESSION WITH
DETAIL, PRIDE IN HIS WORK, AND THE FILM THAT COULD DEFINE HIS CAREER

GOLF SPAIN

SOTOGRADE DESIGNS

Spain's renowned Sotogrande golf complex is undergoing the largest renovation in its history. **BEN WINSTANLEY** finds out what's next

FOR EVEN THE occasional golfer, there is one name in Europe that inspires glossy eyed daydreams of rolling fairways, perfectly manicured greens and stunning views of the Mediterranean sea. Set within a 20sq km stretch of Spain's Costa del Sol, Sotogrande needs little introduction to most, having gained its 'golfing mecca' status soon after its first course opened for play in 1962. Now home to five golf courses, its Valderrama and La Reserva layouts are fierce contenders for the title of best in the country.

The former is held in the highest regard by all who have had the pleasure of playing at the exclusive course over the last 40 years. Godfather of Spanish golf clubs since it first opened in 1974, it is set to get a facelift in the not-too-distant future. But there is no doubt that Robert Trent Jones's magnificent design, has more than stood the test of time – and proved to be a fitting venue for Europe's memorable victory at the 1997 Ryder Cup.

Signature holes are many, although the fourth hole, La Cascada – a par-five with a pond to the right of a two-tiered green – is a standout, while the par-three sixth, surrounded by sand, is one the world's great short holes.

For La Reserva's part, the little brother of the Sotogrande family, its renown is growing. Opened for play in 2004, this Cabell B Robinson design is an intimidating 7,400 metres (not yards) long, but still offers a fair challenge as it winds through two intersecting valleys. Like its big brother, it's possible to keep a score going here if you happen to possess imagination and touch in equal measure (a bit of patience wouldn't go amiss, either). When it comes to the huge greens, though, it also helps if you take a perverse pleasure in putting on greens that are as quick and undulating as you're ever likely to come across. As you'd expect, the off-course facilities and levels of service are second to none – especially the majestic clubhouse, which rises high above La Reserva's finishing hole.

Under Sotogrande's new American hedge fund owners, La Reserva is due to receive 18 brand-new greens and fairway maintenance,

along with a children's golf club and driving range facility, but the most exciting changes will occur in the area surrounding La Reserva.

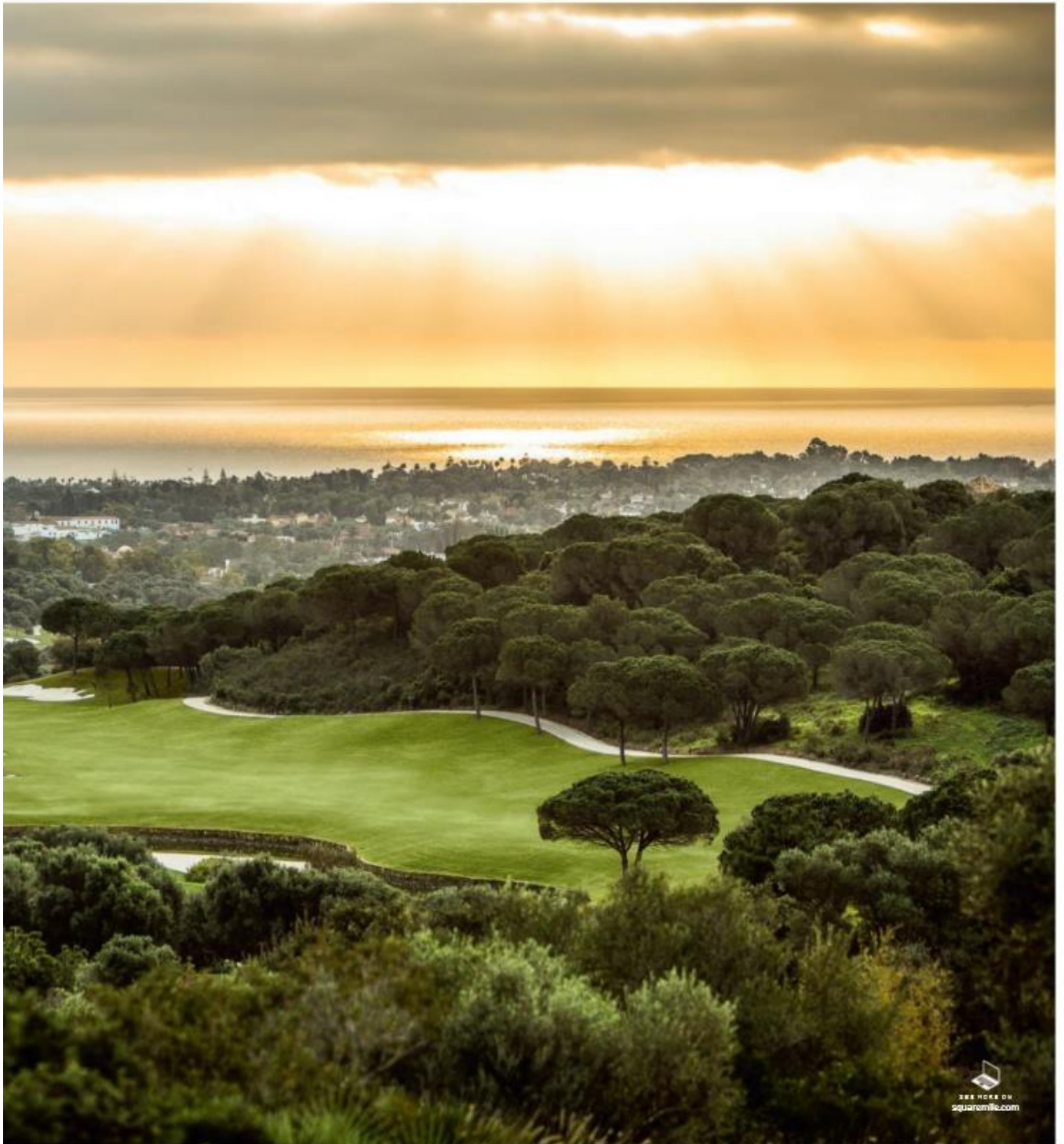
A sizeable €40m worth of investment is currently being pumped into the development as its owners look to build a legacy for Sotogrande that will last the next 50 years. Golf will, of course, remain the mainstay of Sotogrande's renown, but the La Reserva complex will increasingly grow into a country club that match the amenities of the finest resorts across Europe. A brand new tennis club has already opened to the public, while construction is underway to create a huge 2.5 hectare lagoon (one of the largest in Europe) for residents and visitors alike to enjoy swimming and watersports. Polo, hunting, fishing and other outdoor pursuits will continue to enrich the Sotogrande experience beyond its golfing merits.

Slated for completion by the summer of 2018, these amenities will be joined by a first-of-its-kind residential development known as The Seven. Set within a 13 hectare area of parkland, designed by Provençal landscape architect Jean Mus, the ambitious project will see seven of world-leading architects each design a unique property that seamlessly integrates with its natural environment.

Starting at €13m, you'll need to dig deep in your pockets to bag one of the sensational six-bedroom villas but, with so much to enjoy on your doorstep, it could be the best decision you ever make. Needless to say, Sotogrande's future looks as bright as the Spanish sun. Green fees at Valderrama and La Reserva are €390 and €270 respectively. For more information on Sotogrande or The Seven, see: SOTOGRADE.COM ▶

“
A sizeable €40m worth of investment is being pumped into building Sotogrande's legacy





SEE MORE ON
squaremile.com