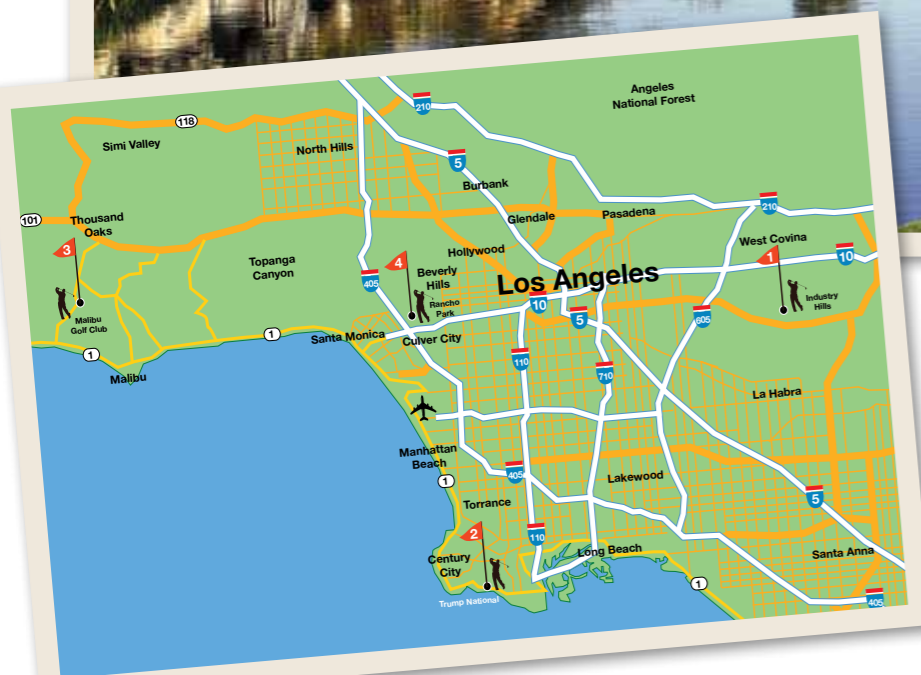
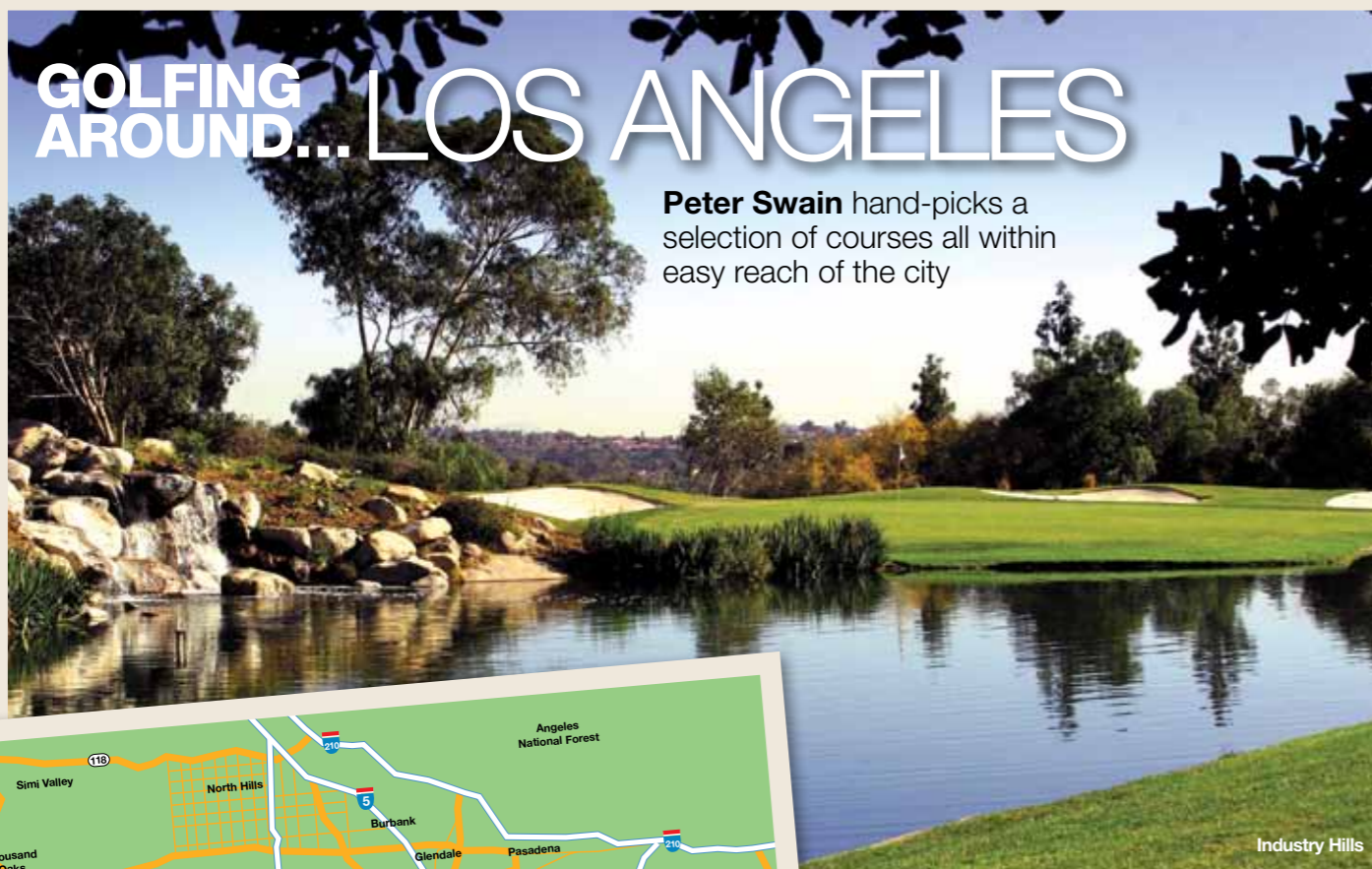


GOLFING AROUND... LOS ANGELES

Peter Swain hand-picks a selection of courses all within easy reach of the city



1. INDUSTRY HILLS

WHERE IS IT? 37km east of downtown.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Many of LA's better clubs are private so positively shun visitors, but Industry Hills not only welcomes all-comers but boasts stunning course design running through a pleasantly hilly landscape. Both the Eisenhower (more commonly known as Ike, being named after the former US president) and Zaharias (or Babe, after the 1940s female golfer) courses

are in immaculate condition and are good enough to have featured on the PGA circuit. Of the two, Ike is longer and wider, with aggressive steep-faced bunkers, while Babe has tighter fairways and is popular with the strong women's membership. After an inviting par-5 first on the Ike, the scenic second hole sets the tone. The downhill par-4 from an elevated tee to a green fronted by water requires careful club selection followed by good distance control with a wedge – it's a peach. From any of the four sets of tees, the course is demanding but fair, with great

picturesque fifth, which requires a draw off the tee to avoid the fairway bunker, followed by a mid-iron into a green with water on three sides.

CONTACT One Industry Hills Parkway, City of Industry; tel +1 626 810 4653; ihgolfclub.com
PRICE Weekdays Ike US\$80, Babe US\$70; weekends Ike US\$105, Babe US\$100 – cart included but walking allowed.
CLUB HIRE US\$50, Cleveland.
CLUB HOURS Sunrise to sunset.
MINIMUM HANDICAP None.
FACILITIES Ike 7,211 yards, par-72; Babe 6,821 yards, par-71. Floodlit two-tier driving range

(6am-10pm); short game area with three practice greens and two bunkers.

AFTER THE GOLF The club is part of the 292-room Pacific Palms Resort, which has a spa, fitness centre, all-day Pacific fusion restaurant and a casual restaurant and bar (11am-late). Stay-and-play packages start at US\$144 per night and include a round of golf on either course.

2. TRUMP NATIONAL

WHERE IS IT? 46km south of downtown, 34km from LAX.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Built at a reputed cost of US\$250 million, this championship course opened with much fanfare in 2005. Based on the pre-existing Ocean Trails Golf Club, a good chunk of money went on erecting several Trump-signature waterfalls. The Dye Design track zigzags down a hillside with spectacular ocean views on almost every hole, and features long forced carries, aggressive bunkering and tough green complexes, all in pristine condition. The course



has hosted a ladies' PGA event and although its bark is worse than its bite, it is better suited to mid- and low-handicappers than beginners. The par-3 eighth, playing 235 yards over water all the way, is typical of the course's many uncompromising challenges. A strict dress code applies: soft spikes only, collared shirts for men, no denim.

CONTACT One Ocean Trails Drive, Rancho Palos Verdes; tel +1 310 303 3240; trumpgolf.com
PRICE US\$275 including cart and use of range; US\$160 after 2.30pm.

CLUB HIRE US\$80, newest Taylor Made, includes six balls.

CLUB HOURS 7am to sunset.

MINIMUM HANDICAP None.
FACILITIES Championship 18-hole course: par-72, 7,242 yards. Driving range, short game area and shop.

AFTER THE GOLF The lounge opens for breakfast at 7am, while the Café Pacific fine-dining offering is open for lunch, afternoon tea and dinner.

3. MALIBU GOLF CLUB

WHERE IS IT? 60km west of Hollywood.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? Running through the peaceful canyons of the Santa Monica Hills, 8km inland from Malibu, you half expect cowboys and Indians to charge out at any

moment. Meandering through pine and eucalyptus trees, this is a great driving course featuring dramatic elevation changes and relatively few bunkers but severely sloping greens, so it's vital to be putting from below the hole. Only single-digit players should attempt to play off the tips, but the forward tees are suitable for a range of abilities. The condition of the course isn't quite as good as the design itself, but this is one of the more chilled venues in the area with a relaxed dress code and convivial clubhouse.

CONTACT 901 Encinal Canyon Road, Malibu; tel +1 818 889 6680; themalibugolfclub.com
PRICE Weekdays US\$75, weekends US\$100, twilight US\$65, includes compulsory golf carts.

CLUB HIRE US\$35, Nike.

CLUB HOURS Sunrise to last tee-off at 4pm.

MINIMUM HANDICAP None.
FACILITIES A 6,614-yard, 18-hole par-72 course, which plays longer. Limited practice facilities.

AFTER THE GOLF The Malibu and Vine bar and grill describes itself as "a hand-crafted beer and wine bar with random acts of cooking". Duck confit tacos washed down with Belgian beer is a fine way to end any round, especially if live music is being played, as it often is on weekend evenings.

4. RANCHO PARK

WHERE IS IT? Century City, 2km from Beverly Hills.

WHAT'S IT LIKE? If the Big Lebowski played golf, this is where he'd play. Halfway between downtown and the beach, this is the course on which you're most likely to hear cries of: "Heads up, dude!" Until 1972, this classic "muni" hosted the LA Open, a PGA event won by the likes of Arnold Palmer, so the parkland design is a serious test. The grass on the greens is a little long and some of the fairways need attention, but for such a centrally located public course, it's a blast.

CONTACT 10,460 West Pico Boulevard; tel +1 310 838 7373; golf.lacity.org

PRICE Weekends US\$48, Fri US\$42, Mon-Thurs US\$38. Single cart US\$16. Rounds can be booked online eight days in advance but as the locals book earlier, it gets very busy.

CLUB HIRE US\$20, various makes.
CLUB HOURS Sunrise to sunset.
MINIMUM HANDICAP None.

FACILITIES A 6,630-yard, 18-hole par-71 course, a short 992-yard nine-hole pitch and putt, plus a floodlit driving range (6.30am-10pm).

AFTER THE GOLF The friendly café (6am-7pm) serves basic fast food plus a knockout udon noodle soup. ■

FACT FILE

■ Well placed for Trump National, the Terranea Resort (terranea.com) has its own excellent nine-hole, par-3 course, spa, pool, friendly bars and fine dining. In the heart of town at Century City, the Intercontinental (ichotelsgroup.com) is close to Rancho Park and will make any golf booking.

■ Air New Zealand flies daily (except Sunday) from London Heathrow to Los Angeles. Visit airnewzealand.co.uk

