

# Costa del Golf

## The region's courses at their best

Better training and specialisation among greenkeepers mean that Andalucía's courses are in optimum condition ahead of high season [P2&3]



### AMATEUR

## A record turnout for the Costa del Golf Tour

Around 200 golfers and fans attended the second round at Guadalmina [P12]



### TOURISM

## Isla Canela, a paradise for all the senses

The resort, located on the border with Portugal, is considered one of the best for lovers of golf [P6]

### "The Costa is still a benchmark for golf"

We speak to Ignacio del Cuvillo, manager of Guadalmina Golf, host of the upcoming women's Open de España [P4]





# Specialist training is the reason golf courses are in such good condition

Greenkeepers do more than maintain the courses, as their duties include managing the budget and staff, and incorporating technical improvements

ALBERTO  
GÓMEZ

**T**hey are, literally, the keepers of the greens: 'greenkeepers'. It is a complicated profession and one which is little-known: the name indicates that they look after the grass on a golf course but their duties actually go far beyond that.

Greenkeepers are responsible for the technical management of all the operations which take place on the courses, as well as coordinating materials, the budget and the staff. Their profile is very varied, but in general they have studied some type of engineering, especially agronomics. But what makes somebody a good greenkeeper?

Experts agree that they must be able to maintain the golf course in the best possible condition, so that the players can enjoy the game, and they have to carry out continual environmental improvements. If we were talking about a football team, the greenkeeper would be similar to the coach: organising and putting each component in its place, directing and supervising their movements. The exacting training of these professionals on the Costa del Sol, which is a European benchmark in golf infrastructure, is the reason the courses in Malaga province are in such excellent condition.

Jaime Ortiz-Patiño, one of the most important golf developers in Spain, who died in 2013, was a leading light for this profession. He gave it visibility and showed the rest of society that this was a vital job in the growth of this sport in this country.

Ortiz-Patiño's decisive contribution to making Valderrama the venue for the Ryder Cup in 1997 has never been forgotten by professionals in the sector. The president of the Royal Spanish Golf Federation (RFEG), Gonzaga Escauriaza, described his role this way: "Many people don't know this, but Jaime's work was essential in the development of greenkeepers in Spain, which today is the leading country in Europe in that sense. He started offering grants to youngsters to go and study golf course maintenance at the University of Michigan. Afterwards, the Royal Spanish Golf Federation took over, but the idea and the initiative were his."

"He was a visionary. He never saw this as a business. He realised that



Greenkeepers carry out improvements all year round. :: SUR

in this country we had some good courses but there was no university training available for staff to maintain them," said one of the professionals we asked about the legacy of Ortiz-Patiño.

There is now an association for greenkeepers in the sector, which shows how much the position has evolved in recent decades thanks to improved training and professionalism. The extension of their duties - budgets, communication with members and distributors, selecting and coordinating maintenance staff, environmental impact - has obliged

**Although their profile is varied, most greenkeepers have studied engineering, principally agronomics**

them to reinvent themselves. There are specific qualifications now, and the studies include golf course design and construction, botany, landscaping, hydraulics, applied economics,



The courses are in perfect condition, ready for the peak season. :: SUR



The equipment has been renewed in recent years. :: SUR

health and safety in the workplace, gardening, mechanics and environmental management.

## Environmental management

The last point, environmental management, is a priority for greenkeepers. Numerous ecological associations spent years criticising the construction of golf courses, but over time this has changed because recycled water began to be used for irrigation. In fact, golf courses have become the starting point for the application of new technologies to protect the environment.

In addition, golf courses act as a brake on atmospheric contamination. One cubic kilometre of grass absorbs 120 kilos of sulphur dioxide a day, and a hectare can release more than 5,000 cubic metres of oxygen a year.

The courses are also carrying out important anti-erosion work, be-

cause they cause a reduction in runoff and contribute to the water in the aquifers.

José Miguel Sánchez, director of the Botanical Garden of Malaga and a lecturer in golf course management at the Autonomous School of Business Management, stresses that golf courses have a positive impact on their surroundings:

"The courses are protected spaces for fauna and flora, they are storage areas for CO2, improve the collection of water and control of runoffs and eliminate pesticides and chemical substances. They also reduce noise and glare, pests and pollen levels, as well as the number of fires, because they are a form of protection and security in areas with a high risk of fire in dry summers," he says.

There are also social benefits: "In a society which continually needs more space for leisure, the



## MANY POINTS OF VIEW AND A SINGLE CONCLUSION

The Junta de Andalucía's Tourism and Sports minister, Francisco Javier Fernández, told the Andalusian parliament's Tourism and Sports committee recently that "there is no excessive or unacceptable pressure to modify the existing decree regarding golf courses," which regulates the conditions for implementing and running courses in the region.

He also explained that his team had proposed a modification to the decree in question, at the time it was being drawn up, but it was considered unnecessary because there "had to be a social consensus anyway" between the administrations and the sector and, "which is most important, about what we want golf courses in Andalucía to be".

"This process of defining what the courses should be like and what their tourist function is, is where we are now," he explained, before adding that in the past few years the Junta had had "different points of view about golf courses which are of interest to tourism," but had "only come to one conclusion" which is that "any golf course of tourist interest must be not only environmentally sustainable, but also socially and financially so."

The minister insisted that the present decree "has the consensus of all the administrations and includes the elements which are necessary to ensure that all golf courses in the region are sustainable."

courses are places where people go to talk, play and compete, amid natural surroundings with a high ornamental value," he adds.

Nowadays, the training profiles of greenkeepers are very heterogeneous, from engineers and technical engineers, principally in agronomics although also in other specialties, to self-taught people with years of experience in maintenance. At present, the trend is moving towards a profile with more specialised training, because this is a position which requires very specific qualifications.

"Before the year 1890 this profession didn't exist. Now it is respected, solid, mature, uniform and well prepared," say sources at the Spanish Association of Greenkeepers, where these professionals, who in general are specialists, share their knowledge with colleagues and their teams, enriching the culture of golf in the sector. And maintaining the courses in optimum condition, it goes without saying.



The course was in perfect condition and the weather was lovely for the golfing event at Cabopino. :: JOSELE-LANZA

# The Costa del Golf Tour gets ready for the final

The names of the players who will compete in the grand final of the SUR tournament at Los Flamings golf course are now known

ALEJANDRO  
DÍAZ

**M**ore than 90 amateur players competed in the third part of the Costa del Golf Tour at Cabopino Golf in Marbella earlier this month. This circuit is organised by SUR and this publication, Costa del Golf. The tournament, which was sponsored by Grupo Da Bruno, had a single start at 9am. Dohler Rudolf Winfried and Eduardo Delgado led the classification in the first and second category respectively, while Silvia López Leiro topped the feminine table.

The circuit was played under individual Stableford rules, where points are given at each hole (one point for a bogey, two for par, three for a birdie and four for an eagle). The first six players who classified in each category in the three tournaments will go straight through to the final, which will take place at Los Flamings course at the Villa Padierna Hotel on 22 July.

In the first category, as well as Rudolf Winfried, Michele Sancillo, José A. Benítez, Nicholas Otter and Francisco Javier Martín also won their ticket for the final, and in the second category Ignacio Cervantes, Diego Sánchez, Manuel Alguacil, Federico Villanueva and Andy Little also classified. In the women's competition, Mercedes Espiñeras, Patricia Preece, Patricia Zimmermann, Mette Jensen and María del Carmen Noguero did the same.



The winners and sponsor. :: JOSELE-LANZA

Those who classified at Cabopino Golf will join the players who took the top places in the first match at Alcaidesa, where Salvador Benítez, Juan Manuel Toro, Peter Grutter, Antonio Corral, Antonio Gil and José Duarte went through to the final in the first category.

In second category it was Antonio Sánchez, Raúl López, David Doña, Matías de los Ríos, Manuel Justo and Juan Manuel Dicenta, and the women who will also be heading for Villa Padierna later this month are Francesca Robert McCormack, Mercedes Espiñeira, María José Vegas, Rosa Risoto, María Victoria Sel and Francine Giuseppone.

### Second part

The winners of the second part of this competition, which took place at Guadalmina were, in the first category, Alexander Reynders, Salvador Gil, George Trowbridge, David Morales, José Antonio Benítez and Javier Pérez. In the second category, Ángel Lainez, José Manuel Espinosa, Julio Alonso, Svein Aurstad and Emilio Escobedo, and Natalie Villar, Rosa Vincas, Ana María García, María del Carmen Morillas and Consuelo González also classified.

It was lovely weather for the event at Cabopino Golf and the participants praised the excellent condition of the course. The sports director of the circuit said there had been a very good atmosphere and conditions of play and that the light wind was reflected by the close results.

The owner of Grupo Da Bruno, Bruno Filippone, was present at the prizegiving at Cabopino Golf. On behalf of the organisers, SUR's commercial manager in Marbella, Leandro Rodríguez, and the head of the External Relations at SUR, Pilar Perea, commented on the popularity of this circuit, with nearly 400 players taking part in the three sections, and announced that there will be a new individual category for the grand final at Los Flamings golf course at Villa Padierna. Those interested will be able to register shortly, and will compete among themselves.



# "The Costa del Sol continues to be a benchmark for golf in Spain"

**Ignacio del Cuvillo. Manager of the Real Club de Golf Guadalmina.** The course in San Pedro will be hosting the forthcoming women's Open de España

**ALBERTO GÓMEZ**

**T**he manager of the Real Club de Golf Guadalmina, Ignacio del Cuvillo, talks to us about the legendary club in San Pedro, which is the venue for the second part of the Costa del Golf Tour and the women's Open de España, where Azahara Muñoz will defend her title. He says the course has now been fitted with some new, innovative technological systems.

**–How has the course changed in recent years?**

–The Real Club de Golf Guadalmina started in the 1950s when its developer, Norberto Goizueta, decided to transform agricultural fields into golf courses. More than 50 years have passed since those first nine

## QUOTES

**"The technology gives us statistics such as the average time spent on a game or the holes where there are the most conflicts"**

**"The great strength of the club is that it is very active socially and has nearly 2,000 members"**

holes were designed beside the Guadalmina Golf Hotel but perhaps the biggest changes began in 2002 when we carried out a huge project to restore the southern course. It was designed by Javier Arana, and we mod-

ernised it from top to bottom.

**–What are the most recent innovations, in terms of technology?**

–We have introduced management systems which enable us to optimise the course, such as Teebbol, which by placing a card with a chip in every bag, in the case of members, and a band fitted with this chip for visitors, enables us to know which hole each golfer is playing. The difference is that the guest bands only last

for 24 hours. The marshals are equipped with an iPad so they can see whether any of the holes on either course is overcrowded, and that gives them a chance to do something about it. It also gives us statistics such as the average time spent on a game or at holes which cause the most conflicts. We have also set up a buggy control system via GPS.

**–What are the strengths of the club, and what type of clients or**



Cuvillo in front of the San Pedro course. :: SUR

**members do you have?**

–The great strength of the Real Club de Golf Guadalmina is that it is a very social club and very involved in people's sporting lives. At present we have nearly 2,000 members. About 50 per cent are Spanish, and the others are from 17 different European countries. Also, the average age has dropped in recent years, partly due to the attraction of our children's school, which has been very successful since its inception.

**–The women's Open de España tournament, which is part of the European Circuit, has been big news for the golf sector in Andalusia. How do you view it?**

–Guadalmina is a club with a long tradition and it has hosted major tournaments for amateurs and professionals, but an Open is something different. The southern course is a very high standard and can be a challenge for the players. It is very interesting because there are some very demanding holes where the golf can be spectacular. The club members have given us their support right from the start, and they will be helping out as volunteers as well as watching. We will be giving it our very best. There will be parking on an adjoining piece of land, and a marquee for refreshments.

**–The presence of Azahara Muñoz will make it particularly special.**

–Azahara is obviously a major attraction, not just because she is the current champion but because she will be playing at home. She is much loved in San Pedro.

## COSTA DEL GOLF TOUR AT GUADALMINA



▲ **Prize giving.** Marketing director for C. de Salamanca, Alejandro González, gives the award to first category winner Alexander Reynder while his counterpart from Joyería Marcos, Esther Ruiz, gives second prize for the women's category to Natalie Villar. :: JOSELE-LANZA

## Record participation

**The tour brought together almost 200 amateur players at the end of June**

:: **ALBERTO GÓMEZ**

**MARBELLA.** Almost two hundred amateur players took part in the second leg of the Costa del Golf Tour at the historic Guadalmina course in San Pedro at the end of June.

This round, sponsored by Bent-

ley and the C. de Salamanca car dealership, had two tee off times, at 9am and at 3pm, due to the record number of competitors who lined up.

Alexander Reynders and Gerardo López came top in the first and second categories, respectively, while

Rosa María Sánchez finished leader in the women's category.

The Real Club de Golf Guadalmina, where Azahara Muñoz will defend her Spanish Open title this year, opened in 1959 and is the second oldest club on the Costa.



▲ **An "excellent" course.** Participants highlighted the "excellent" conditions of the course which will host the women's Open de España in a couple of weeks. :: JOSELE-LANZA





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Isla Canela Golf Resort is renowned for its natural surroundings, proximity to the sea and to the leisure facilities of nearby towns. :: **SUR**

# A paradise for all five senses

The course at the Isla Canela complex, in the far south-west of the province of Huelva, is considered one of the best in southern Europe

## :: **ALEJANDRO DÍAZ**

**MÁLAGA.** Isla Canela Golf is situated within the Isla Canela 'Centre of Tourism Interest', in the beach area of Ayamonte, a town in the far south-west of Huelva province. It is one of the most important holiday destinations for golf lovers.

Its privileged location, barely 50 kilometres from Faro International Airport (Portugal), and its excellent year-round climate, make this an ideal place to enjoy sport and nature at all times of year.

Its four-star hotel has 54 double bedrooms (some with queen-sized double bed and others with twin beds), two junior suites and two triple rooms. Every room has a view of the Isla Canela golf course, because the hotel is situated between holes 17 and 18.

The comfortable, nicely decorated rooms have a private bathroom, hairdryer, direct outside phone line, satellite TV, radio, music system, fridge, air conditioning, central heating, balcony with views of the golf course and a strongbox.

However, if this complex is outstanding for one particular thing

it has to be the 18-hole golf course, which was designed by Juan Catarineu and inaugurated in 1993. The predominant vegetation around the course consists of olive, orange, and eucalyptus trees, and native plants.

The climate in this area is enviable, and it means that golf can be played 12 months of the year on a

perfectly kept course, which is accessible for those with high handicaps and challenging for those with low ones.

Isla Canela's sign of identity is the quality of its magnificent greens of agrostis, and they are famous for being firm and fast all year round. The gentle inclines of the course mean that everyone can

play golf here without needing to hire a buggy.

The course is integrated in a natural marshland, which adds to its beauty and makes it of great interest to birdwatchers. It also means there are natural obstacles on the course, which make the game even more challenging and entertaining.

## ENJOY ISLA CANELA FROM ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE

**For families and travellers who want to enjoy the Isla Canela experience in a more independent way, there is also the possibility of staying in one of the fantastic apartments which the complex has in two nearby but very different areas: some of the apartments have sea views, and others look over the golf course.**



The Isla Canela Golf Resort. :: **SUR**

Playing golf at Isla Canela is always a pleasure and a challenge for all its visitors. The golf course has a practice area which is perfectly designed for working on all aspects of the game.

The players can practise their long game in the 12 covered boxes or, if they prefer a more realistic sensation, on the grass area. The short game can be practised on the pitching and putting green.

This practice area is perfect for individual use and also for large groups, accompanied by a professional. Also, Isla Canela Golf has its own golf school for children and adults.

## **Creative cuisine**

For those who want to do something more than enjoy the golf and fantastic facilities at the hotel, there is a wide range of activities and cultural visits to enjoy during a stay at Isla Canela.

And also at Isla Canela Golf, visitors will find the Thebussem restaurant, which serves the most creative cuisine in Ayamonte.

It is a combination of local products, the Mediterranean diet and fusion cuisine, and gives real personality to a unique tourist enclave. The menu always features Iberian ham, gilthead bream, sea bass and quality meats, prepared perfectly with the raw materials of this area.



## THE MONTH IN PHOTOS



▲ **GINs.** Golf International Nerja Society enjoyed their very own War of the Roses at Los Moriscos on 30 June with The House of Lancaster (pictured) ultimately coming out on top in the match play with 10 victories to York's eight. :: **SUR**



▲ **Andalucía.** The regional Sport and Tourism boards recently hosted the sixth edition of the Andalucía en Verano tournament in Islantilla (Lepe). The tournament is a way to bring together professionals and companies specialising in golf. :: **SUR**



◀ **Arkansas.** San Pedro golfer Azahara Muñoz came 31st on seven under par in the Arkansas Championship, a tournament she described as her "favourite" on social media. The tournament was won by Korean Ryu So-yeon (195 (-18)). :: **AFP**



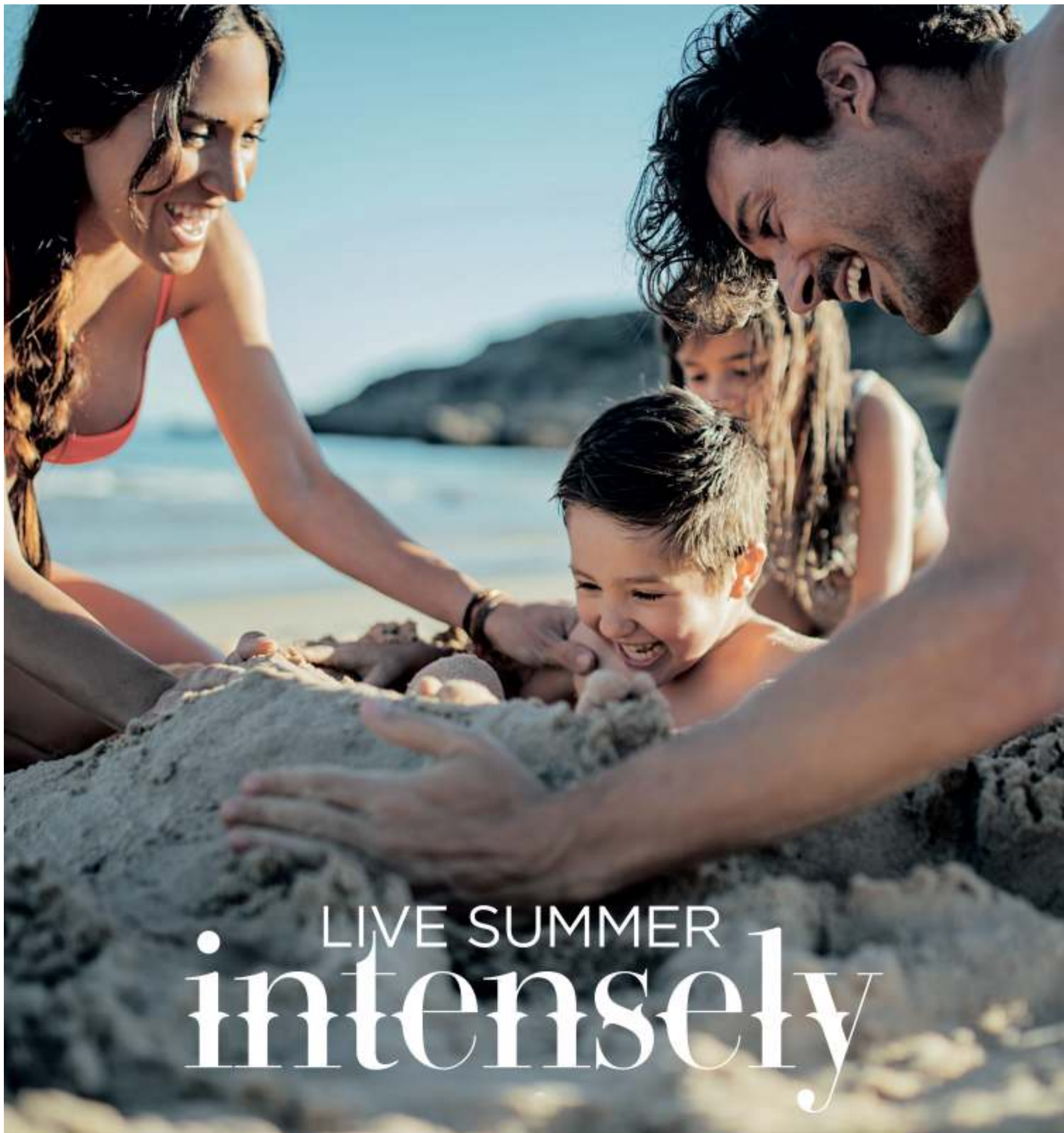
▲ **BMW Open.** Sergio García, winner in Augusta, had another brush with success in Munich as he finished just one shot behind Andrés Romero in the 2017 BMW International Open. Argentinian Romero shot 65 in the final round, while García was part of a three-way tie in second, featuring Richard Bland and Thomas Detry. :: **SUR**

## AGENDA 2017

**8 July****Cabopino**Costa del Golf Tour  
Open tournament**9 July****Añoreta Golf**Torneo Senior Patronato  
Open tournament**15 July****Mijas**Gran Premio Maderas Gámez  
Open tournament**22 July****Los Flamíngos Villa Padierna**Costa del Golf Tour  
Open tournament**23 July****Alhaurín**Pitch and putt  
Open tournament**26 July****Guadalmina**Memorial Noberto Goizueta  
Open tournament**29 July****Mijas**Lucha contra el cáncer  
Open tournament**30 July****Mijas**Asoc. de clubes sin campos de golf  
Closed tournament**4 August****Mijas**Pro Am Felipe Pérez  
Open tournament**12 August****Mijas**Gran Premio Sanitubo  
Closed tournament**19 August****Mijas**Andalucía Tour Series  
Closed tournament**26 August****Mijas**Tamisuel Golf  
Closed tournament**30 August****Guadalhorce**Campeonato de Interclubes Reales  
Open tournament**2 September****Guadalmina**Pequecircuito  
Open tournament**3 September****Mijas**Asoc. de clubes sin campos de golf  
Closed tournamentCosta del  
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