

PAST AND PRESENT UNITE AT ASKERNISH

ENJOY GOLF THE WAY OLD TOM PLAYED IT ON THE MAGNIFICENT ISLAND OF SOUTH UIST

The signature 7th hole at Askernish

There are exceptionally few places in the world that allow you to experience golf the way it was played when Old Tom Morris was still alive. Askernish is one of those places.

Located on the beautiful island of South Uist in the Outer Hebrides, just a short plane journey from Glasgow airport, Askernish Golf Course has been hailed as “the most natural links course in the world” – and you’ll be hard-pushed to find anyone who will disagree.

Painstakingly restored to its 1891 condition, with four of the original greens being incorporated in the new routing, the 6,080-yard par 72 course is laid out in a traditional loop system alongside the Atlantic Ocean and has its fairways formed from the natural contours of the dramatic dunes within which it sits.

What’s more, no artificial chemicals are used in the maintenance of the layout and, during winter months, it’s not unusual to see sheep and cattle graze the course.

Unique? You could say so. Truly, Askernish Golf Course embodies the spirit of golf as it was played over a century ago making it a links purist’s delight.

Don’t be fooled into thinking that it is an easy course, however. Indeed, only one player has managed to beat par since the restoration work was completed, that distinction being held by Scottish professional Elliot Saltman.

Keep your eyes peeled for the seventh hole, the signature hole at Askernish. The ocean comes into view for the first time off the tee and you are faced with a daunting drive down a valley with a bottleneck at 200 yards.

The approach shot is to a diamond-shaped green situated at the end of the valley and nestling at the bottom of a huge dune. Sign for a par here and you’ll be doing very well indeed.

Another hole worth looking out for is the ninth. One of the most picturesque holes on the course, it is a dogleg with a drive seemingly heading straight into the sea. Make sure you hit an accurate approach into the long, narrow green

as there is severe rough on all sides. Again, anything better than bogey is impressive.

The seventh and ninth, however, are just two of 18 magnificent holes on a course, which has regularly come in for acclaim since its restoration.

Indeed, respected American golf writer John Garrity ranked Askernish top of his list of the world’s top 50 golf courses, whilst Chris Santella – the renowned author of several golf titles – included it in his book “Fifty More Places To Play Golf Before You Die.”

World-famous golf course architect Tom Doak is also a fan. In a recent interview, the designer of countless famous courses the world over was asked what he considers to be the most innovative course design that he has ever seen on a course other than one of his own. He replied: “Askernish - it’s innovative because all they did was mow the golf course and it is still fun to play.”

With full clubhouse facilities available to all visitors and special package deals



The west coast is a paradise for walkers, families and wildlife watchers, boasting an array of beautiful white sandy beaches. The green machair land, which is organically-cultivated by the local crofters, is home to an abundance of flora and fauna, while the east coast moorland provides a stunning background to the island landscape with its challenging and majestic heather-clad hills housing red deer and golden eagles.

The abundance of machair and hill lochs boast some of the finest brown trout, sea trout and salmon fishing experiences in Europe. Loch Druidbeg Nature Reserve, meanwhile, is something of a haven for bird watchers with its resident population of greylag geese, white tailed sea-eagles and hen harriers.

There are also many archaeological sites of interest, including Howmore Chapel and the Cladh Hallan round-houses, whilst the local museum provides

an excellent visitor experience with a museum café and craft shop.

There is also a superb range of gift shops to investigate, including Hebridean Jewellery and MacGillivrays, with its excellent range of first edition books and local artwork.

When it comes to somewhere to stay, South Uist is home to a superb choice of hotels, bed and breakfasts and self-catering accommodation - all of which serve the best, freshly-prepared, local produce including seafood and Hebridean lamb – and no visit to the island is complete without sampling the award-winning Salar smoked salmon.

Hotels and restaurants have a lively atmosphere and welcome golf parties to join in the 'craic'.

With all of that on offer, not to mention one of the world's most legitimately spectacular golf courses, who wouldn't want to pay South Uist a visit?

for groups of visitors available on request, Askernish is, quite simply, one of a kind.

Old Tom Morris, it's fair to say, would be immensely proud to see how his island gem has stood the test of time.

Away from the course, South Uist itself is well worth taking the time to explore. A fabulous blend of old and new, it has embraced numerous modern concepts without sacrificing any of its traditions or customs.

DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT...

SOME OF THE WORDS OF PRAISE LEFT IN THE ASKERNISH GUESTBOOK

"Truly unique, once in a lifetime experience."

"A course that everyone needs to experience"

"A real eye-opener challenges your golf!"

"To see what golf was in Old Tom's days look no further than this course"

"Simply the best course ever played"

"Golf as it should be!"

"Just magnificent!"

"Unique golf experience"

"If my doctor told me I must quit the golf but I could play one more round, it would be at Askernish!"



GETTING THERE...

A short 50-minute flight with Flybe from Glasgow airport takes you to Benbecula airport, a half-hour drive from Askernish. On a clear day, this flight will treat you to outstanding views of the contrasting landscape of South Uist. The west side low and flat, laced with endless miles of white sandy beaches, while the east is hilly and rocky. Those looking for a longer stay can opt to travel to South Uist by ferry from Uig on the Isle of Skye and Oban in Argyll – a fantastic opportunity to absorb the stunning panoramas of the North West coast of Scotland. There are also numerous taxi and car hire firms on the island to cater for your transport needs. To find out more, log-on to www.askernishgolfclub.com