

NORTHEAST GOLF

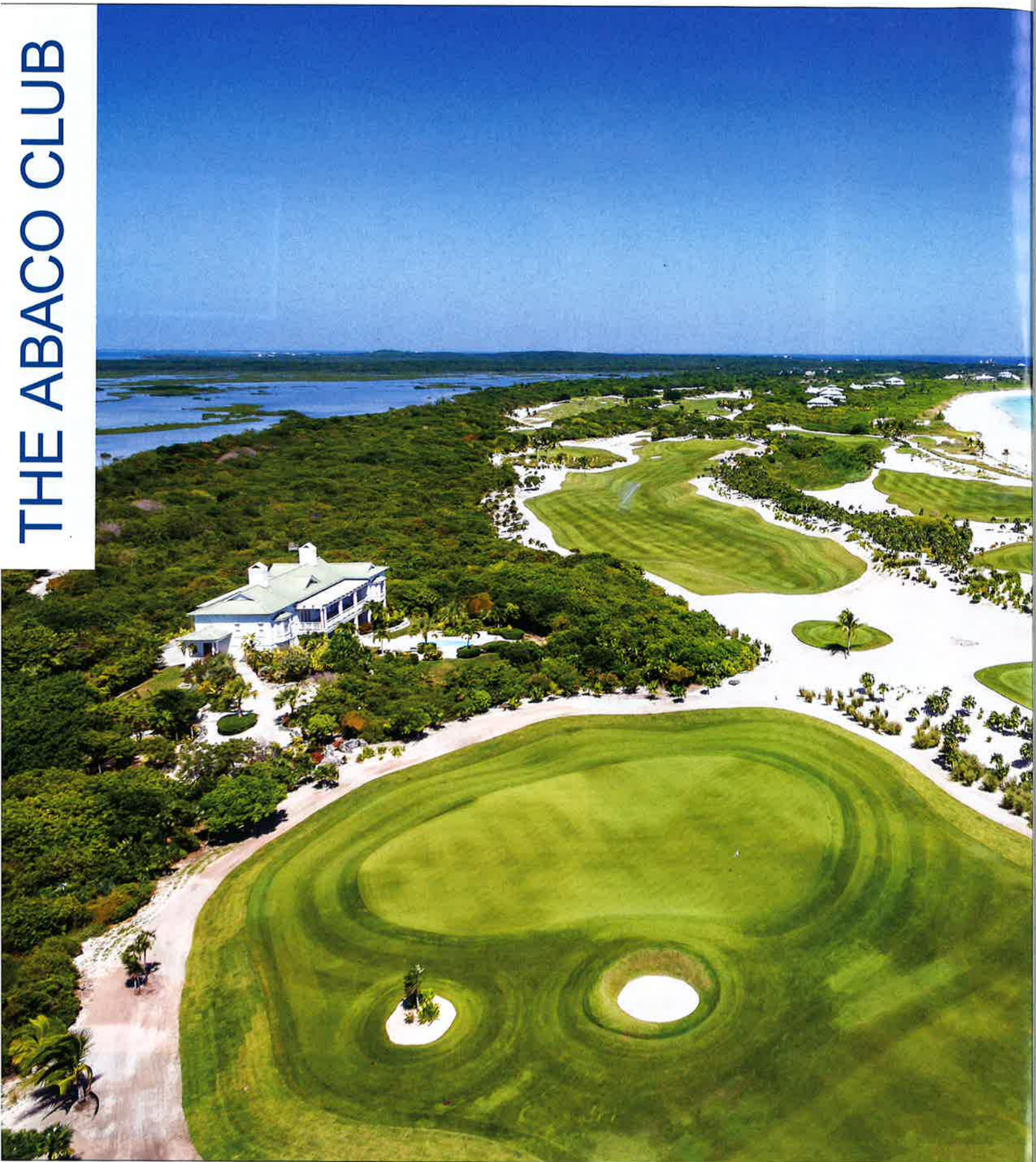
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THE ABACO CLUB

LIFE CELEBRATED IN THE BAHAMAS

2019 **STYLE GUIDE &**
EQUIPMENT PREVIEW

THE ABACCO CLUB





PERFECTION IMAGINED ON WINDING BAY

By Leigh MacKay

THE ABACO CLUB IS A PRIVATE, INTERNATIONAL SPORTING CLUB LOCATED ALONG A 2.5-MILE, WHITE-SAND BEACH ON A SECLUDED PENINSULA ON GREAT ABACO ISLAND.

The beach is the sanctuary for the salt-water enthusiasts, the ocean is the habitat for the trophy-seeking anglers, and the seaside "tropical links" course is ranked #1 in the Bahamas for the avid golfers. And the ubiquitous Abaco parrot that offers a serenade and color display from dawn to dusk reflects its distinction as the club's logo.



"Barefoot Luxury" is the mantra at The Abaco Club on Winding Bay,

The laid-back, intentionally casual atmosphere in this Bahamian haven juxtaposes perfectly with the world-class amenities that surround the 435 acres of this oceanfront environment.

The Abaco Club is a private, international sporting club located along a 2.5-mile, white-sand beach on a secluded peninsula on Great Abaco Island. The beach is the sanctuary for the salt-water enthusiasts, the ocean is the habitat for the trophy-seeking anglers, and the seaside "tropical links" course is ranked #1 in the Bahamas for the avid golfers. And the ubiquitous Abaco parrot that offers a serenade and color display from

dawn to dusk reflects its distinction as the club's logo.

The myriad seafood and specialty dishes at Flippers Beach Bar and The Cliff House Restaurant minister to all culinary tastes and desires. Estate Homes, Villa Cottages, and the Cabanas provide well-appointed and sumptuous accommodations and are just a short walk from the action. However, for convenience and for easy transportation and because no private cars are allowed inside the campus, each residence is provided with its own four-seater golf cart. The European-style Spa, fully-equipped Fitness Center, and heated, resort-style Infinity Pool add three more options to the relaxation/recreation menu.

Non-members are encouraged to visit The Abaco Club, located 186 miles east of Palm Beach, to discover for themselves if they would like to enjoy this type of lifestyle. For Northeast residents who are looking for some sun and fun and sand and golf, what better way to escape the winter doldrums and the depression that comes from golf withdrawal than to catch a plane to Marsh Harbour International Airport and then to take the 20-minute drive to The Abaco Club.

As a guest, what better way to see firsthand why The Abaco Club is perennially rated as one of the "Great Golf Resorts of the World," although, of course, it is not literally a resort. And let the club concierge team arrange everything from ground transportation to boating to fishing excursions to private chef experiences and to

anything else that would make the stay more enjoyable.

Then the bare feet will come out in force on the pristine beach by the clear, turquoise waters of Winding Bay where activities abound, such as swimming, snorkeling, kayaking, Hobie Cat sailing, windsurfing, and paddleboarding. And those bare feet can also climb aboard a power boat to explore the 120 miles of the third largest reef system in the world with its innumerable species of sea life—from dolphins to sea turtles to brightly-colored fish.

The waters that surround The Abaco Club are teeming with great game fish. Saltwater flats fishing, more inshore and in very shallow water, is where the fly fishing happens and where the permit (a type of pompano), tarpon, and bonefish reside. Bluewater or offshore fishing occurs in deeper water and the anglers get to wrangle with the marlin, tuna, grouper, and wahoo. Regardless of the location, all equipment and guides are supplied. The landlubbers are also fully engaged with pursuits like beach volleyball, tennis, croquet, bocce, and bicycling.

The Abaco Club's biggest footprint, of course, is its golf course, the world's first Scottish-style links course in a tropical location and one of the world's best conditioned courses from tee to green. Noted English architect Donald Steel and his Scottish partner Tom Mackenzie have created a showpiece, the #1 course in the Bahamas and always rated in the Top 10 in the Caribbean. Best of all, starting times are not only unnecessary but also irrelevant. The members and guests tee it up whenever they want. As PGA Director of Golf Brian Shaver said, "The first tee is ready when the players are. No waiting. No stress."

The only stress, but let's call it challenge instead, comes from negotiating the Auld Sod-like configurations from the well-trapped fairways, which are spacious for the most part and relatively easy to hit, to the PGA Tour-caliber green complexes, which include huge, undulating surfaces, deep bunkers surrounded by Zoysia grass, and swales and mounds that place a premium on getting the ball up and down. The stunningly green Seaside Paspalum grass is closely mown, lush, hardy, and putts as true as the best Bentgrass greens in New England. The front side is usually downwind with the ocean a spectator along the left side. The back nine wends its way away from the water until the up-and-down, picturesque, and demanding 15-18 holes—in particular, the par-3 17th and the par-5 18th seaside duo—as outstanding a finishing flurry as a player could hope to encounter.

Steel and Mackenzie have utilized the centuries-old links tactic of offering several different ways to play each hole, depending upon the prevailing wind, the bunker positions, and the pin placements. The more the course is played the more the subtleties are understood and recognized. Approach shots, in particular, require finesse and very often necessitate off-green putts or hybrid club bumps rather than wedges. Playing the ball on the ground is usually the wiser technique, and in most cases, a short-siding results in a bogey or worse.



“I LOVE THE RELAXED ATMOSPHERE HERE. IT’S EXTRAORDINARILY BEAUTIFUL, AND THERE’S NO PLACE I’D RATHER SPEND TIME, ESPECIALLY WITH MY FAMILY.”

DARREN CLARKE, ABACO CLUB MEMBER & RESIDENT

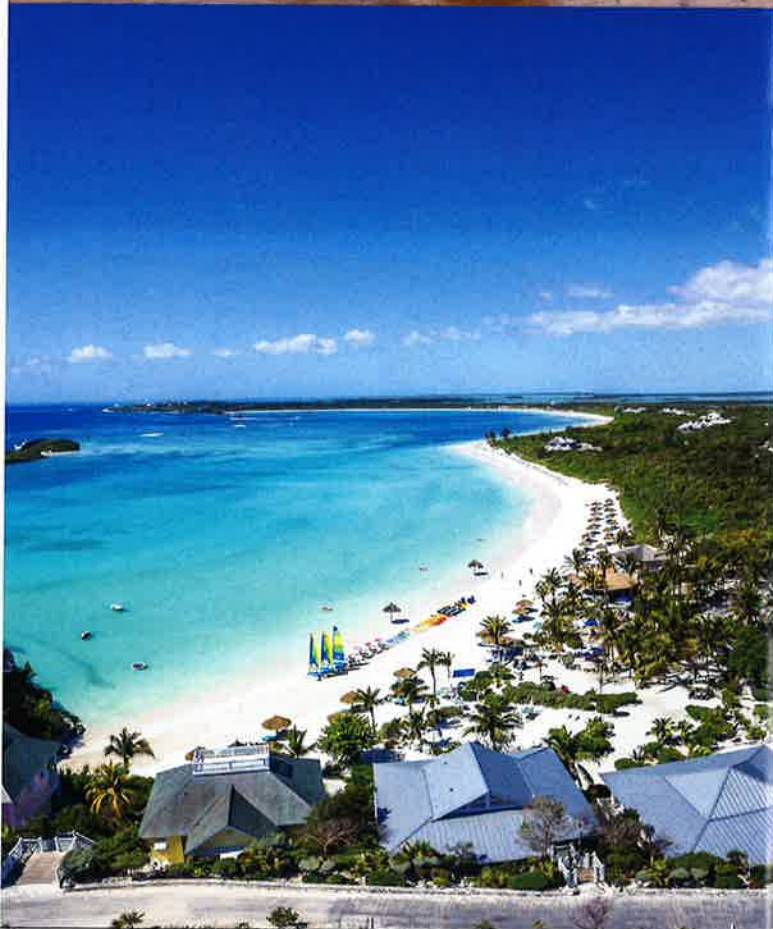
The Abaco Club is the home of the Web.com Tour's Bahamas Great Abaco Classic, which will be seen on Golf Channel in 2019, January 20-23. The pros play from the tips at 7,111 yards, but the four other tees range from 6,652 to 5,379 yards to afford each player a comfortable length. The pros and the members also take advantage of one of the most extensive practice facilities in the Bahamas and Caribbean: a huge double-ended driving range, a putting green, a short-game expanse of 100 yards or less to multiple pins, and an area to work on chips, pitches, and bunker shots.

Irishman Darren Clarke, 2011 Open champ and 2016 Ryder Cup captain, has been a member and resident since The Abaco Club's inception and is its World Ambassador, promoting the club in its marketing efforts and at special events like the Web.com and member tournaments. Besides the golf course, he has another passion—the saltwater flats fly fishing and sport-fishing opportunities. . He said, "I love the relaxed atmosphere here. It's extraordinarily beautiful, and there's no place I'd rather spend time, especially with my family."

Becoming spoiled in an unspoiled setting is the goal at this Southworth Development property and is exactly what President and CEO David Southworth has fashioned for his members. Having developed over \$2 billion in golf and hospitality projects in his three-decade management career, Southworth, whose office is in Newton, Massachusetts, is respected for the high standards he sets for service, design, and amenities. Upon acquiring The Abaco Club in 2014 from what had once been a Ritz-Carlton Destination Club, Southworth Development immediately invested \$10 million into the venue to make sure that his high standards would be met. Plus, a yacht club with marina and clubhouse are currently under construction in nearby Little Harbour, scheduled to open in February 2019.

David Southworth said, "We are passionately focused on two primary objectives at all of our properties: Quality and Community. The Abaco Club is a perfect example of both."

His company currently owns five other master-planned communities, where members at one club also enjoy reciprocal privileges at all others, with full use





of their facilities. Two of them, Willowbend on Cape Cod and Renaissance in Haverhill, are well known to Massachusetts golfers. Creighton Farms in Virginia sports an award-winning Jack Nicklaus Signature layout, and Machrihanish Dunes on the west coast of Scotland has a David McLay Kidd-designed seaside links course that ranks in the UK Top 25. Meredith Bay on Lake Winnepesaukee is the only one not to offer golf.

Finally, when the guest arrives at The Abaco Club on Winding Bay and receives the golf cart, the windshield will have two unforgettable messages on it: "Keep left! Welcome to Paradise."

For more information, visit TheAbacoClub.com

Email any questions to info@TheAbacoClub.com

Or contact the Club Concierge at (242) 367-0077