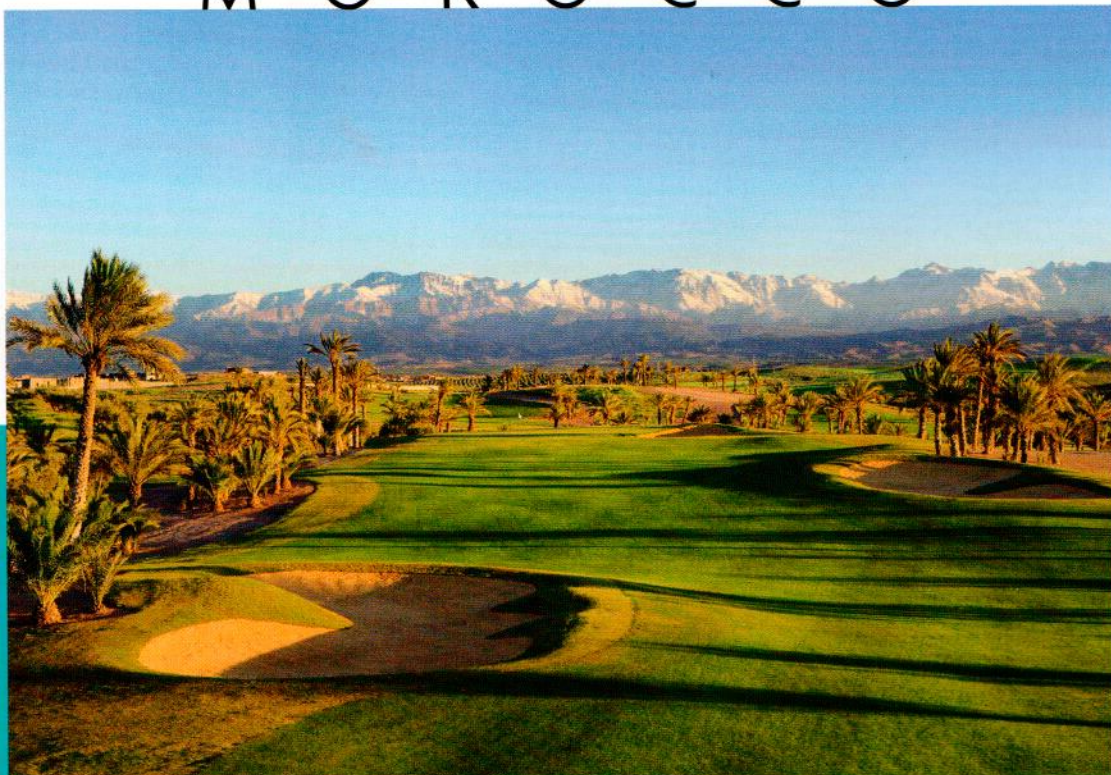


M O R O C C O



Morocco's carefully planned strategy for golf tourism development has seen a whole new tranche of recent openings taking country's tally of courses close to 40.

With many of the layouts built around five-star resorts and high-end property developments, these new venues are aimed at attracting more affluent golfers, and with yet more luxury resorts in the pipeline, it's a trend that looks certain to continue over the next five to 10 years.

While the beaches along the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts have always been a holiday mecca, it's Marrakech that is currently blazing the trail for golf tourism in Morocco. The walled 'Red City' is a magnet for those looking to experience the exhilarating mix of bustling souks and the more refined pleasures associated with five-star resorts and boutique riads.

Golf is an integral part of Marrakech's attraction to a growing number of UK visitors. By the end of 2016 there will be at least 15 courses open for play within the city limits. The best among them are relative newcomers Assoufid, Samanah, Marrakech Golf City and Al Maaden, though old favourites such as Palmeraie and Amekis remain as popular as ever.

WE RECOMMEND**TAGHAZOUT BAY, NEAR AGADIR**

Located 20 miles north of Agadir, Kyle Phillips' highly anticipated layout opened last year to rave reviews. Offering views of the Atlantic from every hole, the course winds its way through native Argan trees before building to a crescendo along the closing coastal holes. The 600-acre resort also features the 152-room Hyatt Place Taghazout Bay Hotel, which opened in May 2015, alongside a tennis club and surf school.

Green fee: £50. taghazoutbay.ma

ALTERNATIVE**ASSOUFID GOLF CLUB, MARRAKECH**

Forming part of a residential development to the southwest of Marrakech, Assoufid's 7,020-yard course is dotted with palm and olive trees and the snow-capped Atlas Mountains provide a stunning backdrop. A dry creek runs through the course, which puts an emphasis on strategy, while its length will appeal to those who really want to be challenged off the tee. A new clubhouse opened last year, while hotel plans are still in the pipeline

Green fee: £55. assoufid.com ▶