

Mexico

Construction is underway at **Chileno Bay**, a 1,300-acre resort-style community in Cabo San Lucas that will feature 36 holes of Tom Fazio-designed oceanfront golf, a private marina and yacht club, the Inn at Chileno Bay for sponsored guests, and numerous other amenities. Spearheading the development team is Mick Humphreys, who first partnered with Fazio on the Vintage Club in Indian Wells, California. Plans call for 600 residences, including two- to eight-bedroom villas, estates that start from \$3 mil-

lion, and a limited number of ocean estates available from \$8 million.

Another community under construction is 1,700-acre **Paraiso del Mar**, located in La Paz on the eastern side of the Baja Peninsula about two hours north of Cabo San Lucas. The development team, John Fair and La Paz native Luis Cano, previously collaborated on the Residences at Esperanza in Cabo. Paraiso del Mar, which has already generated \$100 million in real estate sales, is currently offering 294 single-family homes and more than 400 condos, priced from the low \$200,000s to more than \$1 million. The first of two courses by Arthur Hills (his initial efforts in Mexico) is cleared and awaiting a new central water system to be piped so the greens and tees can be built and grown in. Opening is scheduled for late 2007.

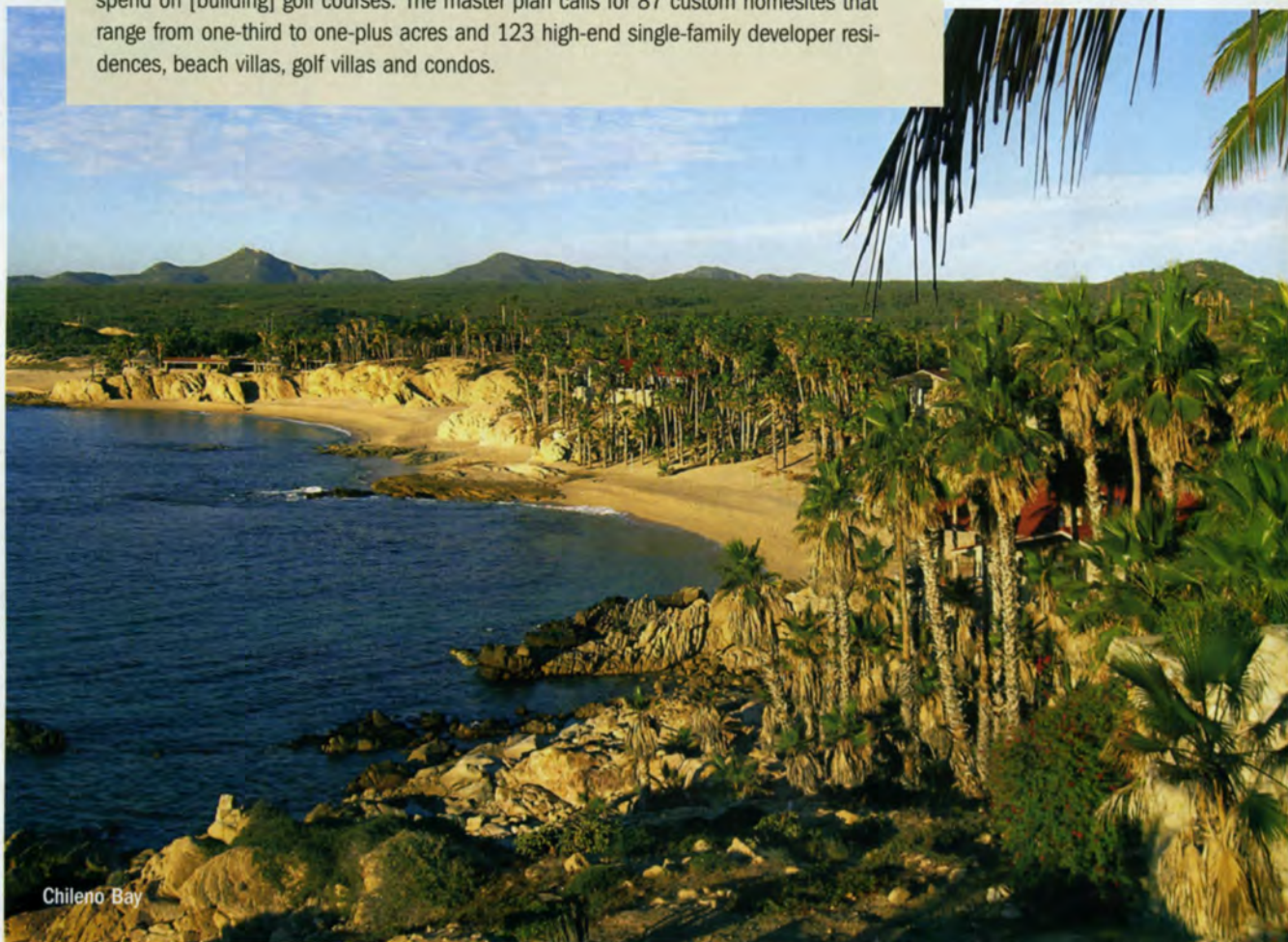
Now Playing

Playa Mujeres, Quintana Roo
Greg Norman, June 2006

Extreme Makeover

Discovery Land Company is making one of Jack Nicklaus' memorable layouts even better. At the revamped **El Dorado Golf & Beach Club** in Los Cabos, one of the first orders of business at the 520-acre project was a major renovation of the course, including reversing the routing of the two nines (opening up new real estate opportunities), redoing the greens and adding tens of millions of dollars in landscaping.

"I think it's one of Nicklaus' best golf courses, and we're making it even better," says Discovery Land CEO Michael Meldman. "We're spending more on landscaping than we spend on [building] golf courses." The master plan calls for 87 custom homesites that range from one-third to one-plus acres and 123 high-end single-family developer residences, beach villas, golf villas and condos.



Chileno Bay

7 What is the membership like?

Colorado-based golf-course designer Jim Engh recently moved to the 16th fairway at Pradera in Parker, Colorado, a community with a course he designed. "I look for how fun the membership is going to be and what the age of the members are, because kids are going to become an issue," he says. "My kids are still young and I wouldn't want to join a place with an older membership that doesn't have many kids' facilities or programs."



8 Is a brand new club the way to go?

"One thing about new clubs is that you get to form your own club and that's really a cool thing," Engh says. "I was a member at a different club and it started to get just a little clique-y and stuffy. At Pradera I knew we'd have at least five years of everybody getting to know each other and getting along with everybody."

Does the club allow public or resort play? These options may trim dues, but they could also remove the close-knit community feel of the place. If you're set on a private club, it's important to understand how it works. Is it an equity club? Who will run the club? The club's structure can be a very good indication on how fair the developer is. And make sure a test round is part of your due diligence. After all, golf is your primary activity, and you will want to spend a lot of time on your playground after you buy. "You should be having a ball out on the course," says Engh.

9 What is the value of a membership?

Do members get market value of their membership and do they own the facilities? Buyers might also want to consider whether their kids and their parents are attached to their membership. "Our memberships are structured as generational," says Meldman. "If I'm the member, my parents are members and my kids are members. So if you're spending a lot of money on a second home, you feel like you're putting an investment in your family. If your parents or your kids can't use it without you, it seems kind of silly to me."

10 What about the golf?



The Hideaway's clubhouse (top) was just one of the many amenities that led Thompson to purchase a new four-bedroom, five-bath bungalow.

Since February, Thompson says the home has appreciated in value by nearly 20 percent, making the investment that much more attractive. Built with a part-Spanish, part-Santa Barbara feel, with open loggias leading out to the patio and framing a view of the course and nearby mountains, the home is warm and inviting with plenty of entertainment and living space.

"There's plenty of room outside and inside to be able to have family and friends over, and that makes it very unique and inviting," says Thompson, who occasionally rounds up a group of golfers to meet at the bungalow for a weekend of golf. He sees the second home not only as a way to escape the grind of his daily life, but also as a viable investment for his family's future.

"This is about creating a lifestyle for my family now, and for the generations to come," says Thompson, who urges potential homeowners to always "buy early" whenever possible by getting on buyer lists or investing in pre-construction properties.

"People wait too long, and then kick themselves later for not pulling the trigger and buying the property and/or membership sooner. It's not getting any less expensive, so if you're looking at this type of living now, and if the service levels and amenities are up to par, then go for it."



A memorable desert backdrop, featuring the Santa Rosa Mountains, and two courses designed by Pete Dye and Clive Clark helped attract Ron Thompson to The Hideaway in La Quinta, California.



Caribbean



The Greg Norman design at Temenos Anguilla

When it comes to partners in golf real estate, names don't get any bigger than Tiger Woods, Ernie Els and the Tavistock Group. But that's precisely the dream team behind a new project in the Bahamas called **Albany**. According to the Tavistock Group, which owns Isleworth and Lake Nona, Albany has plans for 450 residential units. Located less than 10 minutes from Nassau International Airport on the main Bahamas island of New Providence, Albany is being developed as the most exclusive resort-style community in the world. The 565-acre property will feature an Els-designed course, a world-class practice facility and training center, spa and tennis facilities, an equestrian center and a marina that can accommodate yachts up to 240 feet long. According to Tavistock managing director Doug McMahon, Albany's founders' program comprising 75 global members has been "phenomenally successful."

Anguilla, the tiny British West Indies isle with renowned resort hotels and a steady stream of celebrities, will now add its first golf course, courtesy of Greg Norman. Managed by Troon Golf and scheduled to be open at year-end, the 18-hole layout is an integral component of the St. Regis Resort **Temenos Anguilla**, which should be completed by winter 2008. This resort and residential golf oasis is nestled along a mile of pristine beach with panoramic views and vistas of nearby St. Maarten and the Caribbean Sea. The 286-acre property will include 18 estate homes with four- and five-bedroom suites on the ocean, 10 Temenos villas with beautiful golf course and sea vistas, and 64 St. Regis oceanfront residences. Prices are \$1.4 million to \$13.2 million.

Now Playing

Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman (Blue Tip)

Greg Norman, nine holes, planned opening October 2006

Cap Cana (Punta Espada), Dominican Republic

Jack Nicklaus Signature, August 2006

Extreme Makeover

For years, Great Guana Cay near the Great Abacos was owned by Disney and used as a Bahamas stopover for Disney cruise ships. The island is now owned by Discovery Land, and **Baker's Bay** will feature a course designed by Tom Fazio. "We look at properties all over the world," Discovery Land CEO Mike Meldman says, "and I tell people this is the best piece of property for the kind of project we do anywhere we've seen. If we commissioned God to deliver us a property, this would be it." Among the first-class amenities planned is a distinctive deep-water channel that can accommodate large vessels of up to 200 feet long. The 585-acre project is comprised of approximately 350 residential lots/units, including an estimated 175 custom homesites ranging from one-third of an acre to more than an acre. Prices are \$1 million to \$12 million.

4 How easy is it to get there.

A national restaurant-chain CEO chose to buy his second home at Promontory outside of Park City, Utah, rather than Aspen, Colorado, because it was easier for his family to fly into Salt Lake City than Aspen, and he felt that Utah offered nearly all the activities he could find in Colorado, as well as multiple golf courses. Find out where the nearest airport is and factor flight costs into your equation.



"It's important to look at a property and ask what this investment and this property are going to look like in five years, in 10 years, in 20 years," says Peter Forsch, president of Spanish Peaks in Big Sky, Montana. "We can tell prospective buyers exactly how many homesites there will be and the upper limit of golf members."

"I was playing a course in California with someone who had played it a couple of years ago and at the beginning of the round, he said how open and beautiful it was. Then all of a sudden, half the fairways were lined with homes. So you need to understand where the developer is going."

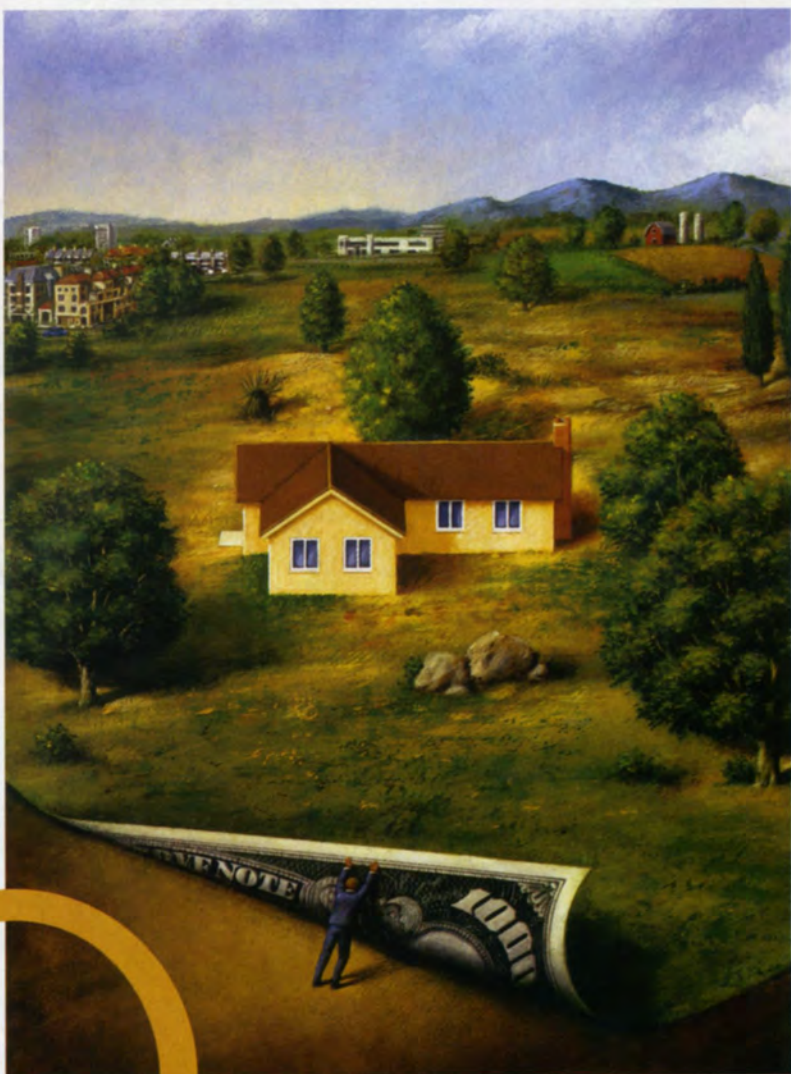
5 What will things look like down the road?

How trustworthy is the developer?

There is a whole line of questions in this area: What kind of track record do they have? How financially stable are they? Who are their financial partners? Do they have a lot of debt or is the property being financed with cash?

"Half of our projects have come out of deals that have not been successful and we've taken over," says Meldman. "The other projects we have either started from scratch or taken over from a very successful group. The people behind a project are important in determining whether it does well."

Most buyers, sellers and developers say that another great way to assess the integrity of the developer is to study their other communities, and to talk to members and residents there. Find out how satisfied they are, and if promises were kept. One very successful high-end real estate salesperson even suggests talking to staff personnel, to see how satisfied they are and to get a general feeling for the property.



10 Questions

Before you buy, always be sure to ask

BY KATE MEYERS

The key to being a savvy golf-community homebuyer is obtaining information. You want to find out as much as possible about your lifestyle, needs and preferences, as well as about the property, and there are certain issues that are unique to golf communities. Here are 10 questions you should ask of yourself and others. >>

1 Where do I want to be?

Sounds simple, but this question is about more than location, especially when you're inspired by the views, dazzled by the course or infatuated with the architecture. The bottom line is more practical. "Buy in a place you're going to use," says Michael Meldman, CEO of Discovery Land Company, the team behind golf communities like Estancia in Scottsdale, Arizona, and Mountaintop in Cashiers, North Carolina. "I've found people purchase a place and don't really know how much they'll use it."



Meldman spends much of his summer at a Discovery property, Iron Horse in Whitefish, Montana. A divorced dad, Meldman finds this spot by the lake to be an ideal place to be with his teenage sons. "There are all the activities we want," he says. "We get up, work out, go to the lake, and they wakeboard behind the boat all day long." While these amenities are perfect for Meldman, they may not be your cup of chamomile, so it's smart to consider your lifestyle. Are you looking for a primary residence? A vacation property? A corporate club? These answers will narrow your choices.

2 Is the lifestyle right for you?

Are there enough amenities and activities not only at the club, but in the surrounding area?

It's important to consider the bigger picture. If you're a golf addict, you'll want to find out about other courses in the area. If outdoor sports are your thing, check out what's offered at the club (from fitness to fly fishing) and how easy it is to get to other nearby recreation. If you're a foodie, make sure there are sufficient markets nearby. Other considerations are access to transportation, health care and other services.



WEEKEND GETAWAY

The Hideaway

For 50-year-old Ron Thompson, there's more to golf-course living than just teeing up and swinging away. While he loves golf, he also wants to make sure his wife, Trissa, and their 12- and 14-year-old sons have plenty of hiking, backpacking, tennis, shopping and other organized activities at their avail. After looking at several communities within a few hours' drive of his primary residence in Laguna Niguel, California, this executive vice president at 24-Hour Fitness, a chain of 32 fitness clubs, opted for a 3,000-square-foot bungalow at The Hideaway, in La Quinta, California.

"We really shopped around, and went through Bighorn, The Vintages and The Reserve," says Thompson, "We checked them all out." What ultimately sold him on The Hideaway was not only the sheer number of amenities offered, but also the level and quality of service that he and his family received from staff members. Best of all, Thompson saw it as being the most family-friendly of the various properties he visited.

Thompson originally bought a lot to secure property at The Hideaway, but snatched up a new home in February 2006 as soon as it was built. "The materials and finishes that [Hideaway developer] Discovery uses are unbeatable, so we opted to buy one that was already up."

His family makes the two-hour trek to the four-bedroom, five-bath bungalow once a month, although Thompson laments that he doesn't have more time to spend at the mountain oasis. "My kids' schedules are packed with activities, so breaking them away and getting them out here is a challenge," he says.

