

FIVE STAR *kids*

TRAVEL + LIFESTYLE

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10 TOP

PRIVATE SAFARIS

DESERT ADVENTURES

BEST KIDS' SPAS



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FAIRY FANTASY • THAI TALES
COUNTRY MANORS • QLD ISLANDS

GOLFING GOLD

Sophisticated and almost regal, there was a time when golf was considered an adults-only sport. Not so any longer. With its combination of strategy, precision and physical fitness, what could be a better way to develop the bond between parents and children? Many high-end golf resorts have recognised this and have come to the 'fore' with some great facilities and programmes to help make golf family-friendly – and with Tiger Woods ranking as the highest earning sports star on the planet, it doesn't hurt to gently encourage the kids to consider a career as a professional either.

OJAI VALLEY INN & SPA

As a member of luxury hotel collection group, Preferred Hotels and Resorts, you know you can expect the best from this Californian gem, but better yet, Ojai is also a member of Preferred Family and Preferred Golf, making it nothing short of royalty among family golf resorts around the world. The course itself is of the highest standard, and can boast golfing great Arnold Palmer and movie star and golf enthusiast Bing Crosby amongst its players. Great news for families is that this year, Ojai is encouraging children to grab a club with their 'Kids Play Free' package. Of course, the resort also offers families all the other necessities of a five star property including Camp Ojai kids' club, babysitting services and a kids' pool.

Ojai isn't the only Preferred Golf resort to offer guests a Kids Play Free package. They have properties around the world who offer the same deal including the Al Raha Beach Hotel in Abu Dhabi, Cameron House of Loch Lomond in the UK and the Finca Coretesin Hotel in Spain. www.preferredfamily.com www.preferredgolf.com www.ojairesort.com

Image: Heritage Mauritius offers junior golf lessons

WORDS Rebecca Lawson

THE MARBELLA CLUB HOTEL, GOLF RESORT & SPA

With stunning views across the Mediterranean to the African coast, the Marbella Club Golf Resort is one Spain's most impressive locations. The nearby hotel boasts a royal pedigree (the original villa was once a home of Prince Alfonso von Hohenlohe) and a designer kids' club by the beach, making The Marbella Club Hotel, Golf Resort & Spa a highly desirable family destination. As well as horse stables, the Golf Resort features an 18-hole course designed by Dave Thomas with an in-house PGA instructor to help the kids take the first steps to golfing glory. www.marbellaclub.com

HERITAGE MAURITIUS

If it's golf in Mauritius you're after, then Heritage Resorts in Domaine de bel Ombre is the place to find it. This development includes three resorts and 11 restaurants to choose from, as well as a championship golf course. The best news for golfing families and beginners is that there is also a nine-hole pitch and putt course nestled into the stunning surroundings, which provides a fantastic frame work for teens and tweens to find their fairway feet. Private junior lessons are offered by a PGA golf pro which includes video analysis; there is a chipping green and driving range as well as a putting green for parents and children alike to practice that most important of shots, because for those youngsters dreaming of the PGA, remember – you drive for show, but you putt for dough. www.heritageresorts.mu

BEACHES OCHO RIOS

A Caribbean family break is the stuff dreams are made of, especially at this stunning resort which offers free unlimited golf to resort guests at the Sandals Golf & Country Club. The club is a short drive away from the resort, but it is worth the trip having been awarded four stars by Golf Digest magazine. All juniors receive free club rentals and Junior Clinics are held every week. For those after a little more one-on-one tuition, private instructors are also available. It isn't just the golf that Beaches does well, though – the resort also boasts its own Pirates Island Waterpark and The Caribbean Adventure with Sesame Street, which includes activities run by everyone's favourite characters including 'From Trash to Treasure with Oscar the Grouch' and 'Bake with the Cookie Monster'. www.beaches.com

DESTINATION TERRANEA

Part of the Destination Hotels & Resorts collection, Terranea is a luxury eco resort only 20 minutes from Los Angeles airport. Their award-winning course offers nine holes of championship-calibre golf in a links location to take your breath away. Golf activities are organised for all ages through the resort and children can make use of the lessons available at the Links Golf School. There is also a short game area for parents and children which boasts unmatched views of the Pacific. When they've had enough of the fairways, there's the Fun Camps, a Teen Scene, kids' Tide Pool, surfing lessons, kayak tours and horse riding, so you can squeeze in an adults-only round. www.terranea.com ★

