

PERFECT MATCH

Tennis On the Go

BEREFT AT THE THOUGHT OF LEAVING YOUR RACQUET BEHIND ON A HOLIDAY? OR SEEKING OUT A DESTINATION SPECIFICALLY FOR IMPROVING YOUR STROKE? FROM PHUKET TO FLORIDA AND MANY POINTS IN BETWEEN, KENT OSWALD HAS ALL THE ANSWERS



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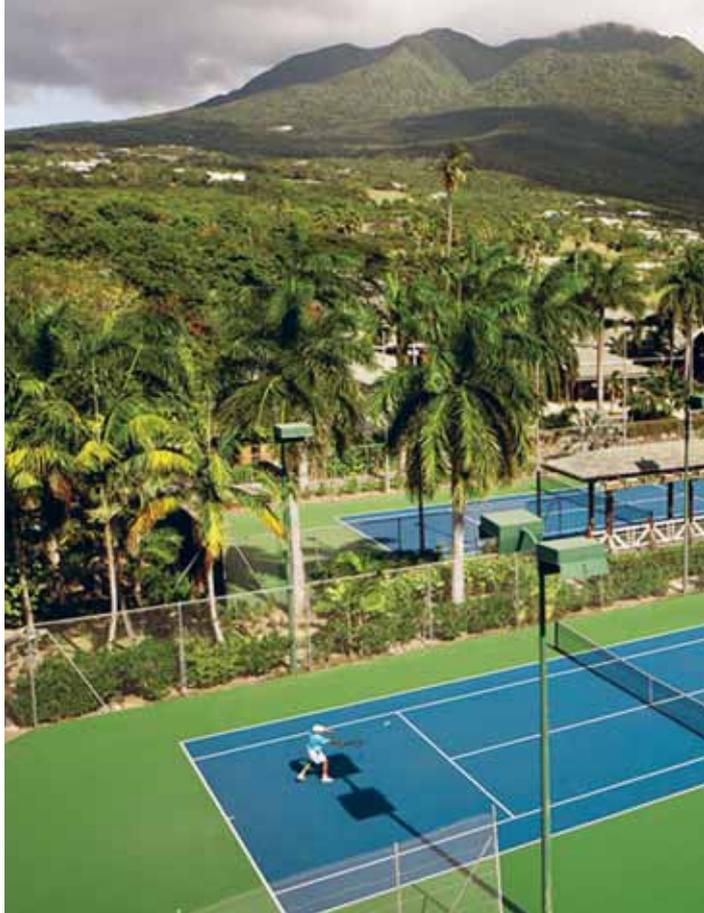
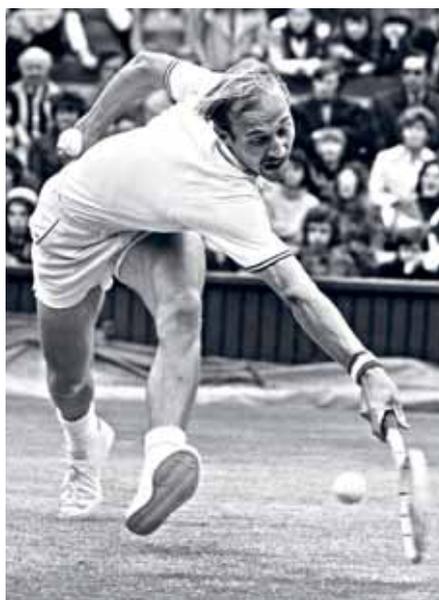
TENNIS IS NOT JUST THE GAME OF A LIFETIME, IT IS THE GAME FOR THIS LIFETIME.

Personalities have never been more engaging nor has play ever been so great – at every level. So it makes sense that the options for players to improve their games have never been wider, offering the opportunity around the globe – and in considerable comfort – to whack the fuzzy yellow balls sometimes with anger, but more often with an internal and external sense that all is right with the world.

The Indulgent Game

Among the most cossetting options for combining learning and living is **Carlisle Bay, Antigua** (carlisle-bay.com), where you reside in one of 87 ocean-view suites and, as part of various tennis packages on the hard or artificial grass courts, take part in individual or group instruction as well as a complimentary round of cardio-tennis. Off-court options include the award-winning Blue Spa to restore both body and mind. An equally sumptuous choice is the Caribbean neighbour **Four Seasons Resort Nevis** (fourseasons.com/nevis), which lolls between silky sands and a lush sanctuary dominated by centuries-dormant volcano Nevis Peak. Peter Burwash International manages play on the clay, hard and artificial grass courts, while downtime attractions include golf on a Robert Trent Jones II-designed course, reef-diving expeditions and hikes to the peak with tropical birds and monkeys as guides. Those wishing to experience a slice of tennis heaven with a European point-of-view should consider **Stanglwirt** (stanglwirt.com) in Tyrol, Austria. Tracing its hospitality history across four centuries, the eco-friendly resort sources food from its own 100ha farm, and the hostelry presents year-round sporting opportunities, including, against an Alpine background, special tennis packages on indoor carpet and outdoor clay courts, also managed by Burwash, which has been servicing the hotel for more than 40 years. To the southwest, with a 100-plus year history as an opulent retreat, as well as connections to the local ATP and WTA tournaments, and its own “tennis and mountain week” programme for younger players, the Swiss **Gstaad Palace** (palace.ch) puts visitors in touch with tennis royalty as Australian legend Roy Emerson continues a four decades-long summer residence for a week at a time. In addition to the courts, the spa, the exceptional dining and the hotel’s other allures, why not helicopter to the >

Doubling up
The Alpine backdrop at Stanglwirt beautifully complements the outstanding facilities for tennis



Matterhorn to partake of a champagne aperitif and regionally inspired lunch on a 3,000m-high glacier. Changing altitude but not the attitude that creates special moments, a stay at the **Hotel du Cap-Eden-Roc** (oetkercollection.com) on the French Riviera, leaves every guest dusted with movie-star sparkle. There are glamorously appointed rooms or seaside cabanas, spa treatments, yoga classes, a heated salt-water infinity pool and five red-clay courts on which to compete or take top-flight instruction amid pines, palms and olive trees. Over in Marrakech, behind its earthy pink pisé-deterre walls, palatial **Amanjena** (amanjena.com) possesses a pair of decorous courts, surrounded by flowering trees and complemented by its monumental mise en scène, comprising 32 pavilions and seven maisons. For those preferring the more raucous Atlantic Ocean, the **Ritz-Carlton, Abama** (ritzcarlton.com/abama), in the Canary Islands, offers instruction and play thanks to the Annabel Croft Tennis Academy, which is joined by two Michelin-starred restaurants, one Basque, one Japanese Fusion, a Dave Thomas-designed championship golf course and a spa inspired by the local terrain and ingredients. A very different island experience is found at the **Thanyapura** (thanyapura.com), on Thailand's Phuket, with its paradisiacal combination of beaches, rainforest, mountains, spa, hotel, spiritual wellness and physical training centre. There is instruction and play for adults, a year-round tennis academy for juniors and free cardio tennis classes. Also in Southeast Asia is

▲ **Peak performance**
Games at the Four Seasons Nevis take place in the shadow of a dormant volcano

◀ **Showing the way**
Among the many ex-professionals providing expertise for willing pupils are, *from top*: former US Open and Wimbledon champion Stan Smith; master of clay Juan Carlos Ferrero; and doubles specialists Emilio Sánchez Vicario and Sergio Casal

✈ *Nice Côte d'Azur to Hotel Cap-Eden-Roc: 12miles/20km; Marrakech to Amanjena: 8miles/13km; Tenerife South to Ritz-Carlton, Abama: 19miles/31km; Phuket International to Thanyapura 8miles/13km; Bali Ngurah Rai International to Mulia, Nusa Dua: 10miles/16km; Barcelona-El Prat: to Academia Sánchez-Casal 4miles/7km; Alicante Airport to JC Ferrero-Equelite Tennis Academy: 42miles/67km; Alicante Airport to La Manga Club: 66miles/106km; Cannes-Mandelieu Airport to Mouratoglou Tennis Academy: 11miles/18km*



Bali's **Mulia, Mulia Resort & Villas** (themulia.com/bali) located in the southern part of the island in Nusa Dua. The resort accommodates with lagoon rooms, tropical gardens, spa experiences and two hard courts put to use by guests in complimentary clinics and lessons.

Channelling a Championship

For those keen to win their club cup, a stint at a serious academy can be even more appealing than any number of Michelin-starred meals. The **Academia Sánchez-Casal** (sanchez-casal.com) opened in Barcelona in 1998 by the great Spanish doubles team of Emilio Sánchez Vicario and Sergio Casal, and has served as the training ground for Andy Murray and Svetlana Kuznetsova, among others. There are now satellites in Nanjing, China, and Naples, Florida, and in addition to a year-round academy for high performing juniors, ASC offers weekly programmes for adults and families, as well as summer and holiday camps. In Alicante, Spain, the **JC Ferrero-Equelite Tennis Academy** (equelite.com) is led by the former World No 1, 2003 French Open champion and Davis Cup winner. Year-long programmes include those for high-performance juniors, and there are weekly and weekend adult camps for individuals and groups on a campus that features swimming pools, a golf course and putting greens. **La Manga Club** (lamangaclub.com), a holiday and sports resort in Cartagena, provides instruction on clay, hard and artificial grass courts, and a "junior club" accepting children as young as three months.

Former British No 1s, Jeremy Bates and Jo Durie, who together claimed Wimbledon and Australian Open mixed doubles titles, have helped players with their strokes, and the club hosts junior academies, high-performance tutorials and weekend and weekday adult programmes. The **Mouratoglou Tennis Academy** (mouratoglou.com), sitting between Monaco and Cannes, encourages a holistic approach to training, offering amenities often associated more with a resort than a school, though its status as current European base for Serena Williams as well as up-and-comers like the 20-year-old Greek sensation Stefanos Tsitsipas, and 14-year-old junior French Open winner Cori Gauff should prove its seriousness. In addition to the year-round academy, there are junior and adult camps as well as a programme to train coaches. **Saddlebrook Tennis Academy** (saddlebrook.com/tampa-tennis) traces its roots to the great Australian tennis coach Harry Hopman, and alumni include Pete Sampras and Martina Hingis. Current pros in residence in Tampa, Florida are John Isner and Alexander Zverev, with grounds that include golf and spa options, as well as 45 courts of all Grand Slam surfaces. Also with Hall of Fame sheen is the **Smith Stearns Tennis Academy** (smithstearns.com), part of the Sea Pines Resort on Hilton Head Island in South Carolina. It is headed by former world No 1 and Wimbledon and US Open champ Stan Smith and offers team training as well as boot camps and weekend or full-week sessions for adults and juniors. ■



COURT PILGRIMAGES

The **International Tennis Hall of Fame Museum** (tennisfame.com) in Newport, Rhode Island connects the game's past and present. Home to the first US national championships and situated in a Charles McKim-designed Gilded Age club, the museum displays over 1,900 artefacts, and the grass courts are put to use by visitors and club members as well as for a post-Wimbledon tournament. Oceans away in Victoria, the **Kooyong Lawn Tennis Club** (kooyong.com.au) serves as the spiritual home of Australian tennis. Reaching out to the tennis community beyond its membership, the club hosts the Kooyong Classic each January as a warm-up for the Australian Open. Finally, while no single country can claim full ownership, it is hard not to think of Britain as one of the game's parents. A journey to the mothership, the **National Tennis Centre** (Ita.org.uk/about-the-Ita/national-tennis-centre/), which opened in 2007 in Roehampton at a cost of £40 million, can be made as part of individual or team training, or to watch Wimbledon qualifying tournaments.

SAVE THE DATE

The Timetable

25-30 SEPTEMBER 2018

Junior Davis Cup and Junior Fed Cup by BNP Paribas/Budapest
itftennis.com

Who: Featuring every country's best players under 16 since 1985. Past winners have included Rafael Nadal with Spain in 2002.

Last time: Czech Republic are the boys' champions, while the US are fighting to take the girls' title for second year in a row.

Did you know? Flavia Pennetta and Roberta Vinci, who won Fed Cup for Italy in 2013, claimed junior Fed Cup together in 1998.

✈ *Budapest Airport to National Tennis Center: 17miles/28km*



13-21 OCTOBER

Kremlin Cup/Moscow
kremlincup.ru

Who: Combined men's and women's indoor event. Home favourite Yevgeny Kafelnikov claimed five titles between 1997 and 2001.

Last time: Maria Sharapova returned to the tour but German Julia Görges took

the title, defeating Daria Kasatkina in the final.

Did you know? Begun as a signifying event of Perestroika, it sparked Russian emergence as tennis power.

✈ *Moscow Sheremetyevo Airport to Olympic Stadium: 18miles/30km*



6-10 NOVEMBER

Next Gen ATP Finals/Milan
atpworldtour.com

Who: Top seven pros under 21 on the men's tour, with one wild card. It features "non-traditional" rules (eg, first-to-four game sets).

Last time: In the inaugural event, South Korea's Hyeon Chung saw off the No 1 seed, Andrey Rublev, of Russia, in the final.

Did you know? Germany's Alexander Zverev qualified for both the Next Gen event and the main season-ending Nitto ATP finals in 2017.

✈ *Milan Linate Airport to Fiera Milano: 7miles/12km*



29 DECEMBER - 5 JANUARY 2019

Mastercard Hopman Cup/Perth
hopmancup.com

Who: Male and female teams from eight countries with ties consisting of singles for both sexes and a mixed doubles match

Last time: Roger Federer teamed with Belinda Bencic to claim the trophy for Switzerland.

Did you know? A fan favourite for the past 30 years, the tournament is likely to be replaced in 2019 with new ATP team event.

31 DECEMBER - 12 JANUARY

ASB Classic/Auckland
asbclassic.co.nz

Who: High-class field for men's and women's tournament that acts as an Australian Open warm-up, though the vibrant nightlife draws in as many fans as the tennis.

Last time: Julia Görges defeated Caroline Wozniacki and Roberto Bautista Agut

beat Juan Martín del Potro. **Did you know?** The ASB Tennis Centre, venue for the event, traces its history back to the 1920s.



25 FEBRUARY - 2 MARCH

Abierto Mexicano/Acapulco
abiertomexicanodetenis.com

Who: The renowned beach destination holds Latin America's most prestigious tennis tournaments, with seven of world's top ten men in the 2018 draw.

Last time: Argentinian Juan Martín del Potro claimed the winner's giant silver pear trophy.

Did you know: Thomas Muster, Rafael Nadal, and Venus Williams have all claimed multiple titles.

✈ *Acapulco International Airport to Princess Mundo Imperial: 5miles/8km*

A GLOBAL SHORTLIST OF TOURNAMENTS WHERE THE ON-COURT ACTION IS RIVALLED BY THE OFF-COURT ALLURES

4-17 MARCH

**BNP Paribas Open/
Indian Wells, California**
bnpparibasopen.com

Who: The tournament bought by billionaire by Larry Ellison of Oracle in 2009 for \$100 million attracts the best of the best from both sexes.

Last time: Del Potro (again) and Naomi Osaka won the respective 2018 finals. Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer have each won five times

Did you know: Often referred to as the fifth slam, with respect to the opulence of the grounds as well as the depth of the draw.

✈️ *Palm Springs International Airport to Indian Wells Tennis Garden: 16miles/26km*



13-21 APRIL

**Rolex Monte-Carlo Masters/
Roquebrune-Cap-Martin**
montecarlotennismasters.com

Who: The red clay and the blue Mediterranean expanding into the distance, perhaps the world's most gorgeous tennis setting, bring in the top players.

Last time: There is no finer clay court expert than Rafael Nadal, of course, and he claimed his 11th title here this year.

Did you know: The tournament dates back to 1897, but the 1981 result stands out – Jimmy Connors and Guillermo Vilas finished as co-champs (or co-runners up) due to rain.

✈️ *Nice Côte d'Azur Airport to Monte Carlo Country Club: 22miles/35km*



6-19 MAY

**Internazionali BNL d'Italia/
Rome**
internazionaliibnlditalia.com

Who: A prestigious title and glamorous tour stop featuring high-end fashion, cuisine and music along with world's top players of both sexes.

Last time: Nadal inevitably claimed his eighth title in the men's; Elina Svitolina of Ukraine retained her women's crown.

Did you know: Foro Italico is a sports complex built of massive concrete, marble

and mosaics.

✈️ *Rome Ciampino Airport to Foro Italico: 22miles/35km*



25-29 JUNE

**The Boodles/Stoke Park,
Buckinghamshire**
theboodles.com

Who: Andy Murray, Rafael Nadal and Andre Agassi have all made this exhibition part of their pre-Wimbledon preparation.

Last time: Results matter little compared to enjoying the grounds that date back to the Domesday Book, with the current club located amid 1.2sq km of parkland, lakes, gardens and monuments.

Did you know: Attendance is limited to 1,900 per day and seats are all within a few metres of the courts.

✈️ *London Heathrow Airport to Stoke Park: 10miles/16km*

14-21 JULY

**SkiStar Swedish Open/
Bastad**
swedishopen.org

Who: A lot of happy professionals – ATP Players voted it their favourite tournament 11 years in a row. **Last time:** Fabio Fognini claimed his seventh ATP title – with five of his triumphs taking place in the month of July.

Did you know: Play takes place at a seaside resort at a time of year when darkness lasts only a few hours.

✈️ *Ängelholm Airport to Bastad Tennis Stadium: 14miles/23km*



AUGUST

**Odlum Brown VanOpen/
Vancouver**
vanopen.com

Who: One of North America's most prominent "minor league" professional tournaments, past champions include Maria Sharapova, Marcos Baghdatis and Johanna Konta.

Did you know: Host club Hollyburn is set on a forested hillside with spectacular views across Vancouver