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UP TO PAR: Fancy a game of golf in the sunshine after you get off the plane? Then head to Lisbon says Chris Stratford.

HE time spent journeying to and from a holiday destination is often a tedious necessity, slicing off as much as two days from a tip, the trip is a short one, tedious becomes hisome; if it is a short specific the specific property of the travelling golfer denied his daily fix on the course.

Travel to Portugal's capital, however, and there lies a solution in Lisbon Sports Club, a parkland golf course with British origins which, sitting within 20 minutes' drive of the airport, allows the visiting player to have a round on both the day of this or her arrival and the day of departure.

Lisbon Sports Club was one of three golfing venues visited during a few days spent on the Lisbon Golf Coast, a region encompassing Lisboa, Cascais, Sintra and Setubal and including 22 courses in a strikingly beautiful coastal area.

Lovers of the Royal & Ancient game have become familiar with the triplets 'golf, Portugal and the Algarve', but Lisbon has its own triumwirate: Golf, history and culture.



HISTORIC CHARMS: A tram makes its

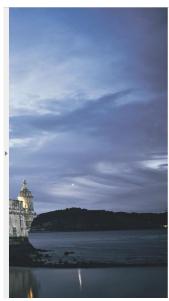
Lisbon has its own triumvirate: Golf, history and culture.

While not officially twinned with Barcelona, the city of Lisbon has much in common; a slightly smaller but equally fascinating and engaging brother. The city, comprises many different neighbourhoods, each of which reflects its origins, such as the Old Town, founded by the Phoenicians; Mourani, founded by the Phoenicians; Mourani, founded by the Phoenicians; Mourani area; and arguably its most captivating section, Belen, home to World Heritage architecture and museums. Here sits Belem Tower, built early in the 16th century as a fortress to guard the gateway to Lisbon's harbour, an alluring architectural structure which vies for the visitor's attention along with the nearby Jeronimos Monastery, resting place of the explorer Vasco de Gama. Both are adomed with intricate stonework incorporating motifs which pay homage to the Age of Discovery. History also abounds at Pousada de Cascais hotel, only three years old and with all the amenities and luxury the discerning traveller requires, but created on the site of an old fortress which was built as a royal residence 500 years ago. Breakfast taken shortly after dawn in the hotel's restaurant overlooking the marina at Cascais both fortified and

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GOLF, HISTORY AND CULTURE: Clockwise from main picture, Belem Tower, in Belem, Lisbon; Montado Hotel & Golf Resort; the Jeronimos



GETTING THERE

relaxed us shead of tackling Oitavos
Dunes, a links course built inside SintraCarcais Nutal Pessets the dunes and
a few of the holes- including the firsthave more of a parkland feel, but as the
course weaves its way towards the sea
the holes become progressively tougher,
the wind becomes a factor and offers the
golfer the challenge links golf has laid
before its exponents since the sport's
creation.

Oitavos offers discounted green
Gest to guests staying at this exclusive
five-star hotel, a stunningly bold and
contemporary design. It comprises 142
guest rooms, all of which have their own
all continues of the control of the control
fly out say at Oitavos and wake up
one morning to find the hotel's lounge
you might think you had one too many.

Don't worny, the furniture is fitted with
wheeks so that it can be regularly moved
around to provide a different aspect.
Oitavos has wast, floor to ceiling

windows, with the best view of all saved for the kitchen on the basis that contented staff produce excellent fare. The meal enjoyed there after our round validated the theory, a significant for the content of the staff produce excellent fare. As at Ottavos, water of the staff produce excellent fare it is the strategically-placed streams and lakes which will test the player rather than wind blowing in off the sea. Set among wineyards, it is flatter than either Lisbon Sports Club or Oitavos, but do not assume that means less demanding. Huge greens may induce a false sense of security with the approach shot, but their subdle undulations mean a put from distance can be an exacting the staff of the staf



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