

Argentario Golf & Wellness Resort



Golf resorts

19 aprile 2022 6 min. di lettura Stephen Killick

Finally free of lockdown, Leading Courses guest writer Stephen Killick was able to leave the UK for a round of golf amongst the rolling hillsides of Western Tuscany to discover the recently rebranded Argentario Golf & Wellness Resort.



Rome, they say, is the eternal city. Yet those ancients who believed that - despite whatever happened anywhere else - Rome would last forever, did not foresee today's problems. It is the second most congested city in the world, coming behind only Bogota in Colombia, with pollution to match.

So, if you are finding Italy's capital more infernal than eternal after a few days' sightseeing, just point the car northwest away from the traffic and drive the 90 minutes to Western Tuscany where the Argentario Golf and Wellness Resort awaits alongside some fantastic food and perfect peace. There is also a very challenging golf course to take on too.

Playing Argentario Golf & Wellness Resort



The third hole at Argentario Golf & Wellness Resort. (Photo: Argentario Golf & Wellness Resort.)

Once, where we are standing as we look out from the clubhouse terrace up at Mount Argentario, we were surrounded by water although now the island is connected to mainland Tuscany by three causeways.

As one might imagine, the winds can get up around here making a tough course even more difficult. To give you some idea, playing from the men's more forward yellow tees off my most recent 11.6 handicap, I was awarded and needed every one of sixteen shots.

The opening holes at Argentario are glorious and it is hard to believe that this course was reclaimed from what was at the start of this century a rubbish dump. Architect David Mezzacane and pro golfer, Baldovino Dassù, had tons of earth shifted to create the raised greens and tee boxes that we see today. Testament to the quality of the course, Argentario's golf course was awarded PGA National Italy status by The PGA in 2019.

We start from a raised tee, from which we can see mainland Tuscany rising in the distance, and set off down a valley where pretty much everything drifts in from the right. It is a good solid start and we should hope for a par here although during a dry spell, and it can get very dry here, our ball can easily be tossed to the back of the green making two putts awkward when the flag is at the front.

We then encounter a classic par-3 hole and probably the best of the five we play. Another high-raised tee with a sumptuous view and 177 metres from the yellow tee boxes, our ball must fly at least five of the seven greenside bunkers and possibly the sixth if we are to hit the green whilst anything long disappears into some nasty rough at the back.

The front nine of Argentario is the stronger of the two loops of nine with eight absolutely first-rate holes to be taken on. Only the eighth, a tricky par-3 played down an almost impossibly narrow corridor between overhanging trees and a stone water course, feels like an in fill. However, having played eight, the best hole on the property comes at nine and is also the toughest. green making two putts awkward when the flag is at the front.

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The ninth hole is the most difficult hole at Argentario Golf & Wellness Resort. (Photo: Argentario Golf & Wellness Resort)

This is a championship standard par-5 and no mistake, playing 535 metres from the back tees and a long, narrow gently sloping dogleg left up to a raised green with water on the right-hand side and an almost vertical slope running down into it.

Having kept two powerful blows on the fairway the third shot is the most testing of all with a narrow entrance to a kidney-shaped green. The natural reaction is to aim too far left and be caught by a lone, but strategically placed, greenside bunker.

Do not be at all depressed with a bogey here as when my playing companion played his fourth shot to within inches of the hole we decided to break our round and celebrate his par in the clubhouse with a quick drink before heading out again!

Some more tests to overcome

We head out toward Mount Argentario, that those with a head for heights can enjoy travelling up, although for the time being we must concentrate on the narrow channel running in front of the green if we don't want to lose our ball on one of the shorter and easier par-4 holes on the course.

The back nine lacks the powerful, visual impact of the front but there are still some tests to overcome and holes to enjoy. The twelfth is a subtle little par-4 that measures only 264 metres from the yellow tees but is all about placement whilst the 16th is a particularly fiendish 372 metres with a stream sinuously snaking its way across the fairway like an inverted 'S' and a lake ready to swallow any pulled approach shots into a tricky two-tier green that also boasts a tree at the front of it.



A view of the 18th hole and the clubhouse at Argentario Golf & Wellness Resort. (Photo: Argentario Golf & Wellness Resort)

We meet the same water again as we play the long par-3 17th where the natural reaction is to play away from it and be caught by two deep bunkers at front right. It is regarded as the second-toughest hole on the course and my partner and I were high fiving one another with our brace of pars!

Despite being one of Italy's most environmentally friendly courses, I do wish someone would chop down some trees on the corner of the dogleg on 18 that prevent many higher handicappers getting onto the fairway with their drives. A high booming shot is required from even the yellow tees that many do not possess.

Forgetting your troubles

However, by now we are near enough the excellent clubhouse that serves a top-flight variety of wines and also beer, rare at many Italian courses, all provided by helpful and charming staff. This being Italy, food is a passion and the standard is such that many locals simply come up to Argentario for lunch.



Golf course troubles are soon to be forgotten when enjoying a nice cocktail on the terrace or in the pool. (Photo: Argentario Golf & Wellness Resort)

And for those who have wisely chosen to stay in the luxurious surroundings of the hotel, there are two swimming pools to enjoy as well as the spa and a superbly equipped gym. There is also Giuseppe, a barman capable of providing some of the finest bespoke cocktails even the most demanding drinker could require. After a couple of his sublime mixtures, I had almost forgotten about wanting to take an axe to those trees at 18.

For more information and reservations visit: <https://www.argentarioresort.it>