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South of France

**YOUR GUIDE TO...**

# LES LANDES OF PLENTY

High quality links and parklands await those who swap Spain and Portugal for the South of France

If you didn't study European geography at school, where, you might ask, is Les Landes? When you land in Biarritz (a quick trip from Gatwick on easyJet) and drive an hour north, you'll find yourself slap bang in the middle of the sand dune coast and pine forest hinterland of Les Landes. Door to door, it's quicker than a jaunt to the Algarve or the Spanish costas, and the golf is just as good.

We stayed at the Villas La Clairiere aux Chevreuils estate where [Summer France](#) have several upmarket villas for rent.

Ours had a huge footprint, with room to accommodate eight people, an expansive terrace and steps leading down to a 25-metre pool; perfect for families and groups of golfers.

The golf offering in the area is top draw. Moliets Golf Club (below, [golfmoliets.com](#)) is less than a mile away and provides a memorable round among the dunes and the forest. While the toughest holes are arguably in among the trees, most players will take back special memories from the vast open spaces of three holes on the back



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nine (13, 14 and 15) – links golf at its purest.

A 45-minute hop down the road lies the beautiful town of Hossegor, and its course (golfhossegor.com) is a Rory 6-iron away from the town's fabulous indoor market. If there is such a thing as an ideal location for a golf course, this must be it.

A parkland layout designed in 1927 by Arnaud Massy and England's John Morrison, its sandy base and extensive tree-lined, sheltered location create a tranquil day out. The conditioning is reminiscent of Augusta National during The Masters; greens running at 10.7 on the stimp and a double cut each morning to provide the smoothest greens I have ever played in France.

All the holes have a very individual style and shape to them, but arguably the most memorable is the par-5 15th – a blind tee

shot up and over a mass of gorse and heather to a wide, downhill fairway, slightly dog-legged to the left.

Arguably, the No.1 in these parts is the fearsome Seignosse (seignosse-golf.com). While there is no view of the sea, the course is close to the Bay of Biscay and the prevailing winds can swirl about the forest that surrounds the holes.

The clubhouse, perched atop the high point in the landscape, dominates the landscape. Post-round, sitting on its terrace provides much amusement, watching fellow players tackle the longest hole in European golf. At 728 yards, the 18th is down as a par 6. As it is played uphill virtually all the way, adding 10% to this distance doesn't seem enough! In the slightly damp conditions we experienced, it played more like 800 yards!



Capbreton

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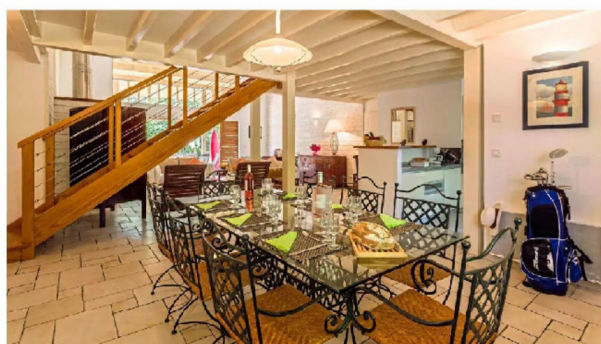




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Villas La Clairière aux Chevreuils

Laid out over quite undulating sandy terrain with the fairways bordered by thick pine trees, several lakes and a number of winding streams, Seignosse is arguably the toughest test of golf in France. Indeed, designer Robert Von Haggo sculpted the landscape here two years after he created the equally taxing Old Course at Les Bordes in 1987.

Many players have given warning of the 17th – the only hole without a bunker. In lieu of any sand, water dominates the left side approach shot to a green which appears to be perched in the lake. I little wonder that it also appears in a book of the world's greatest holes.

Of course, this region of France is not as famous for its golf as for its food and culture. The market we discovered in Hossegor might well have been the highlight of the culinary offerings we experienced. Lunchtime tapas from the various stalls and displays, eaten within the hall, washed down with copious amounts of local red, white and rose wine was a great warm-up for our round.

Equally, evening meals at Le Grill de l'Océan on the beach at Moliets are both sumptuous and comprehensive. Interestingly, many locals and holidaymakers tour the area by bicycle – e-bikes are especially favoured, with many a golfer seen carrying clubs over their shoulder on one.

## Need to know

### Accommodation

We booked our villa through Summer France ([summerfrance.co.uk](http://summerfrance.co.uk)), who offer eight villa and holiday apartment complexes in Moliets, with Villas La Clairière aux Chevreuils being its premium option. The villas have between three and five bedrooms, with the larger sleeping up to 12, and are designed to blend in with the woodland and natural surroundings. They are ideally situated a short cycle (2km) from the main beaches and resort centre, and 800m from Golf de Moliets.

### Booking

When clients book, [Summer France](http://Summer France) offer the option of a week of unlimited golf at Moliets for £327 (for a 1 summer dates) or with an additional round at Seignosse and Hossegor for £510.

### Transfers

Transfers were with Summer France, who can book airport transfers for guests from Biarritz, Bordeaux or Bilbao airports or Dax train station (direct high-speed train (TGV) from Paris and a connection to Eurostar). An example price would be £195 / €230 return journey from Biarritz, for up to eight passengers.