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DRIVING AMBITION TO DESIGN WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL GOLF COURSE



THE GOLF COURSE AT DOMAINE DE LAVAGNAC

Two of golf's most respected names have teamed up on the new Domaine de Lavagnac €500 million golf and spa project in Languedoc-Roussillon in the South of France.

PGA golfer Charles Cox and Raymond Hearn, chairman of the US Association of Golf Architects, are working together on the design of what is already being branded as one of the most photogenic golf courses in the world.

Centred around a 17th century chateau known locally as the Versailles of Languedoc, the breathtaking scenery around the exciting new Domaine de Lavagnac golf course is definitely not below par.

Set among 300-year-old woodland with majestic Mediterranean oak and pinetrees, vineyards and ancient olive and citrus fruit groves, this exceptional 18 hole international golf course is destined to be one of the most outstanding not just in the South of France but the whole of Europe.

It is being developed by The Frere Group, which is owned by the four Cox brothers - Barry, Charles, Melvyn and Bobby, who have amassed expertise in a diversity of successful business ventures including the Hard Rock Café chain.

Frere Group Chairman Charles Cox has been a golf professional for 30 years and has ten years experience in golf design having designed and headed construction on many golf projects in the UK.

Charles said: "The golf course at Domaine de Lavagnac will be one of the most beautiful in Europe.

"Utilising every natural twist and undulation in the terrain, 250 year old oak trees will line the fairways, leading the golfers on through some of the most spectacular scenery in the area, as they circle round the Chateau and its vineyards and olive groves.

"I have been working on the golf design project since we bought the Chateau four years ago, and in my opinion, this site is absolutely perfect for the creation of a championship golf course, using the traditional construction methods which have been missing in many modern golf courses.

"With the expertise of Ray Hearn, chairman of the US Association of Golf Architects, my goal is to create a course similar in character to Sunningdale's Old Course and the two courses at The Berkshire - but the difference here in

Languedoc is that the golfers will have over 300 days of sunshine, making the golf even more enjoyable.

"By modern standards, the golf course at Domaine de Lavagnac is quite short at under 7,000 yards, but it will be a real thinking man's course, with every hole throwing up fresh challenges, with features including two lakes, sand bunkers and heather and lavender grass hollows to be negotiated."

Award winning golf course designer Ray Hearn shares Charles Cox's belief that a great golf course should follow the natural terrain.

"I never want anyone to look at a golf course and say 'There's a Ray Hearn designed course.' My goal is that each golf course maintains its own identity and remains true to the characteristics of the land it is built upon and the tenets important to its owner."

It's not just the fairways on the golf course that will be green at the Domaine – The Frere Group is incorporating as many eco-friendly features in the development as possible, right down to that golf course grass, which will be a drought-tolerant strain requiring minimum watering.

The golf course at Domaine de Lavagnac is due to be completed in the Autumn of 2011, at the same time as the first phase of properties.

As well as the golf course, buyers at Domaine de Lavagnac will be surrounded by 192 hectares of vines, olive groves and woodland, with a 17th century chateau, known locally as the Versailles of Languedoc, at its centre.

Golfers looking to tee off at Domaine de Lavagnac can currently cash in on a stylish two bedroom ground floor apartment priced at €430,000, for a deposit of just €36,000. With the special 25 year leaseback scheme on offer from The Frere Group buyers will be entitled to a French government TVA rebate of €70,000, bringing the purchase price of the property down to €360,000. Adding to the attraction, buyers have a guaranteed yearly rental income of

7%, giving an annual yield of €25,200, which will cover the 5% fixed mortgage AND pay the maintenance costs on the property over the 25 year leaseback period.

This €500 million golf retreat will offer a wealth of amenities including a golf academy beside the golf course, a state-of-the-art spa, tennis courts, swimming pools, plus a tempting selection of gourmet restaurants, a conference centre that can accommodate up to 500 people, a 70 suite hotel in the chateau that will be operated by “The Address” deluxe brand – which had just won an award for The Best New Hotel Group In The World, plus a selection of exclusive retail shops.

The location is also ideal, less than 15 minutes drive from the Mediterranean coast and its wonderful white sandy beaches where Lavagnac will run their very own exclusive Beach Club and just 30 minutes from France’s most popular city, Montpellier.

There are five international airports within an hour’s drive from Domaine de Lavagnac, offering a choice of low cost flights to this luxurious holiday destination.

For buyers interested in securing their ideal place in the sun at this idyllic South of France development, and for further information on the unique 25 year guaranteed leaseback scheme on offer from The Frere Group, contact the Domaine de Lavagnac UK office on 0870 6265269 or visit the website at www.domainedelavagnac.com.

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For further press information or photography, please contact Nan Ensor at BRIGHT PR on 07801 855367, email: nane@brightpr.com or Sharon McEwan on 0141 248 1234, email: info@brightpr.com

Notes to editors:

Charles Cox

Charles Cox has been a golf professional for 30 years, and has ten years experience in golf design. Between 1980 and 1985, Charles played on the European Golf Tour. In 1986 he was appointed Head Golf Professional at West Essex Club, then from 1993 to 1996, he designed and headed the construction team on three English golf complexes. Charles was awarded the management contract for Essex Golf Complex in 1996, then between 1999 and 2004 he formed the Essex Golf Centres Ltd, taking a 50 year lease on Essex Golf Company as well as the 36 hole Hainault Forest complex, and a 25 year lease on Merrist Wood Golf Club in Surrey. The three golf complexes under his ownership sold in excess of 250,000 green fees in one year. At the end of 2005, Charles Cox sold the business for in excess of £6 million and concentrated his expertise on the design and development of Domaine de Lavagnac, including its championship golf course.

Raymond Hearn

Raymond Hearn is one of the leading golf course designers in the world and has recently been commissioned for several remarkable international golf course design projects: Giang Dien Park Golf Resort in Dong Nai, Vietnam, Doomi Golf Club near Icheon, South Korea; and Porto Marina, on the Mediterranean coast near El Alameen, Egypt.

Hearn's career in the golf industry dates back more than twenty years, when he won an Evans Scholarship from the Western Golf Association and earned multiple degrees in turfgrass science, soil science, golf course design, landscape architecture and land planning at Michigan State University. In his 23-year career he has designed and remodelled numerous courses throughout the U.S. and abroad.