

Golf on tourism main course

Gujarat Greens Are Blossoming To Lure Travellers From Across Globe

Ankur Jain | TNN

It is not without reason that state government wants to promote golf to lure tourists. The brand ambassador of Gujarat tourism, Amitabh Bachchan is building a bungalow in a leading golf course near Ahmedabad.

The state tourism department is too gearing up to woo domestic and international travelers to the green abodes.

"We planning to bring in golf tours and are in process to tie up with various golf courses in Ahmedabad and Vadodara. With the golf course we are trying lure tourists from far eastern countries which already are looking at Gujarat for its strong Buddhist circuit that is being developed in the state. We will soon set up a process to facilitate those who want to develop golf courses in the state on unutilized land," said Sanjay Kaul, MD, TCGL.

The city now boasts of three golf courses complete with suave contours and beauti-

ful water bodies and couple of more coming up. Two golf courses in Gandhinagar and an Army course near airport, makes the region with one of highest density of golf courses in the country.

"The city already has an active golfing culture and many are making plots around the course as their permanent residence.

Ahmedabad is now all set

to tee off

as a

destination

on the

international

golf tourism

circuit.

We have already

started

getting

inquires

from international

hotel chains to set up a

shop

here," said city-based

realtor Pranav Shah, who is

setting open his Jack

Nicklaus-designed 18-

hole golf course next

week. The course coming

up on the

Ahmedabad-Viramgam

road will also

have an internation-

al golf academy and more than 800 villas built around it. Shah said many have booked the villas to make the place as their permanent residence.

The golf courses in the city have already started hosting national tourneys and now clubs are getting queries from agencies selling golf tours to foreign tourist. Industry experts said that golfing scene spruced up in Gurgaon mainly because of Japanese majors like Maruti Suzuki and Ahmedabad might be the next.

"Japanese fly to Indonesia, Singapore or Malaysia just for a game of golf. With increasing business cross-pollinations between Japan, China and Gujarat, green courses of Ahmedabad may soon start attracting tourists. Tour operators from across the country are approaching for tie-ups for golf tour-

ism and we are exploring possibilities," said Jaxay Shah, who manages one of the biggest gold courses in Gujarat near Nal Sarovar.

Tour operators said with more than 50 million golfers around the globe, golf tourism has become a multi-billion industry.

"We are looking at Gujarat as a serious player on the golf tourism circuit. Currently, the Golden Triangle (Delhi-Agra-Jaipur) and Mumbai-Pune-Bangalore circuit see the maximum of tourists, mostly from Europe and the US. But now with golfing culture increasing in Ahmedabad, we are exploring ways to feature it on the map," said Vinay Marwah, MD, Delhi-based Uday Tours and Travels.

