



The

Westchester

Palm Beach Is High Goal

Palm Beach is exactly as Don Johnson depicted it in the 1980's television series, *Miami Vice* – irrepressively smooth, impossibly glossy and enviably glamorous. A sunshine-bathed utopia where the average resident seems to own \$25 million in pocket change and everyone drives a Maserati, Bentley or Aston; Palm Beach **is** the good life!

Driving up the palm-lined drive of The Breakers Hotel really is the sort of thing that dreams are made of. Originally built by an oil and railroad magnate named Henry Morrison Flagler (he constructed the railroads to the East Coast of Florida), The Breakers was the home away from home for many of America's most historic families and Presidents and was the pinnacle of glamour and high-living. Amazingly the hotel burnt down twice, the first occasion rebuilt in its original wooden materials. The second time, however, occurred 12 years after the founders' death,

and as a monument to his lavish vision, his family wished to create the most fabulous hotel on the East Coast. In 1926 and at the cost of \$7 million they began work on the now iconic hotel that was modelled on the Villa Medici in Rome.

In its very grand neo-classical façade, it is everything of the 'old-guard glamour' of yester-year, although as soon as your car is spirited away by valet parking and you're checked in to your room (go for the ocean views – they are to die for!) you see that this is no dusty, old-fashioned pile of expensive bricks and mortar. Over the last 15 years, the privately-owned hotel has spent over \$250 million on refurbishment and in maintaining its high standards.

The staff are genuine and knowledgeable and only wish to make your stay even more fabulous, if it is anyway possible. Did we mention the golf? Well there are two 18-hole courses to choose from, which will help you keep your eye in for

that all important polo penalty. And the spa? Guerlain are resident and have the most fabulous treatments to pamper you with.

The loggia or entrance lobby is pure Italian renaissance, which is echoed in The Circle, a great globe-like hall that is spectacular, but cleverly not an overwhelming setting for breakfast. Don't opt out for toast and cornflakes here; get Diana to rustle you up a fabulous spinach and asparagus omelette – the perfect start to the day in the Sunshine State. After all, you need strength to tackle the world famous exclusive shopping on Worth Avenue or in one of the exclusive boutiques within the walls of the hotel, with your platinum card.... and a Coutts chequebook... preferably someone else's!

The beach is less than a 30 yarder away, so you can opt to sunbathe on the sand as opposed to by the side of one of the five pools (yes, we said five), or relax in your own private,



luxury Beach Bungalow (available for day rental) or you could even amble down the surf and opt for the shopping extravaganza that you will find only 15 minutes down the stretch.

But Worth Avenue isn't just a blingy façade of designer boutiques and a street acting as a sports car showroom; quite delightfully, through shaded arches there lies a wealth of chic restaurants and individual boutiques, quiet gardens with the aroma of bougainvillea lingering in the air.

And as if Worth Avenue didn't have enough to entice the financial elite onto its pavements, a very super Saks has opened its doors, showcasing all the usual coveted Jimmy Choos and Ellie Saabs. Found at 172 on Worth Avenue, it really is the place to find that dress for the US Open or that lunch at The Breakers.

And to coincide with The Westchester and the whole England entourage hitting stateside, Saks now stock quintessential English brand,

Tony Lutwyche suits – off the peg and bespoke.

Tony came and joined *The Polo Magazine* for coffee at The Breakers, just a short amble up the beach from Worth Avenue, to talk about the exciting plans afoot for his brand.

"I had been in discussions with bringing the Lutwyche suits to America for some time but it was only through my instigation that the launch coincided with The Westchester here in Palm Beach.

And Saks was really behind this great event; we collaborated our launch party with the UK and US teams so they were in attendance and added that touch of glamour to the launch.

I have been championing the 'Made In England' label because I think it is so important to support home-grown production but it is obviously a great selling tool with the States.

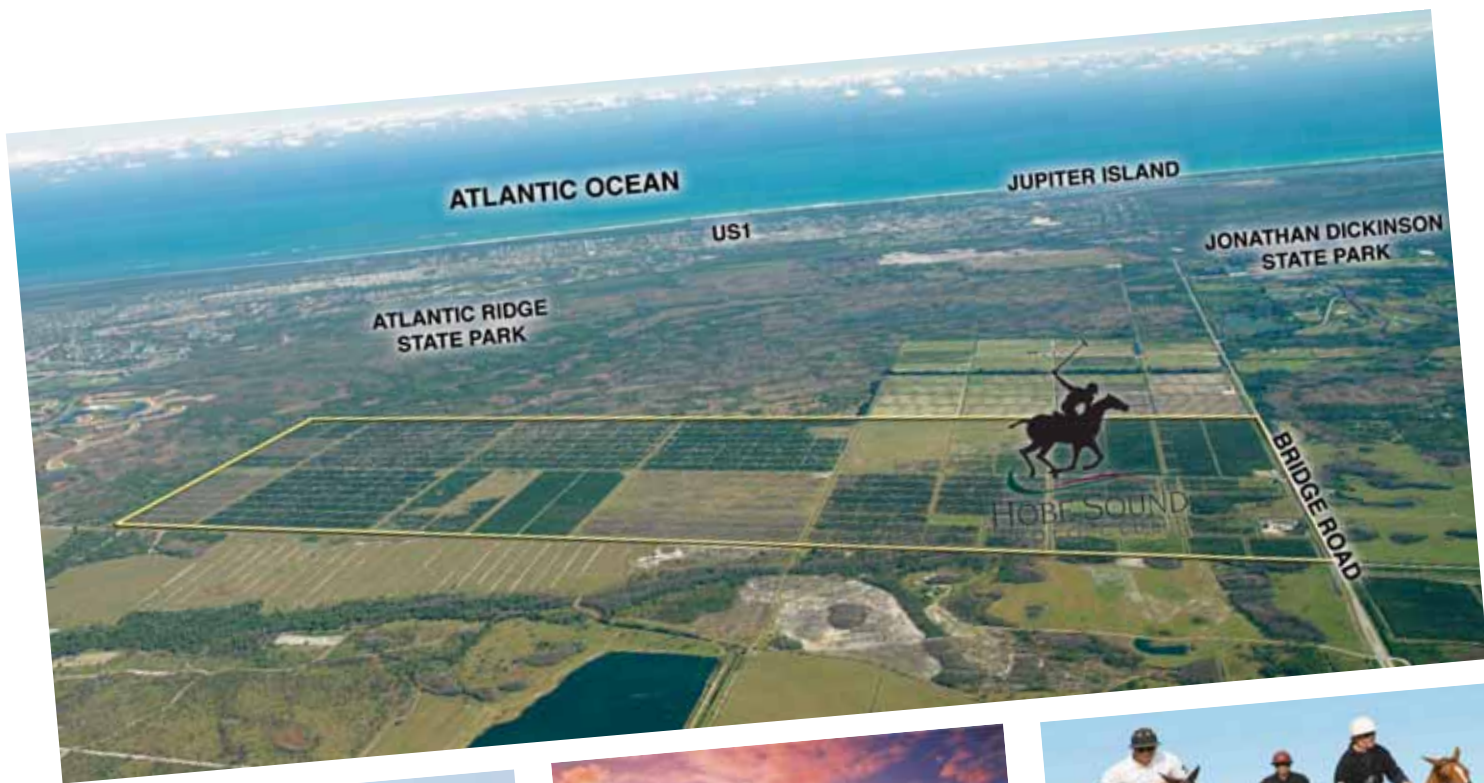
It is obviously a great opportunity to be stocked in Saks and I look forward to continuing our relationship with them."

And yet more was forth-coming; the weather – just glorious, especially after the grey skies of home. It was supposed to be their winter when we visited for The Westchester Cup in February, and yet the sun beat down with temperatures up in the 30s.

Even better, it's only half an hour from Wellington, the home of Florida polo. Here, every other gate leads to a polo club, or a country club with polo facilities. It really is polo, polo – which is obviously how we like it.

Pop along to the Polo Museum and Hall of Fame, Lake Worth (001 561 969 3210) to read up on your polo history or grab some chukkas at the International Palm Beach Polo Club (001 561 204 5687), the hosts of this year's Westchester.

Alternatively you could try Hobe Sound Polo Club, just a short drive up Highway 1-95. Located a few minutes away from the ever so chic Jupiter Island – which at just one mile wide



The Bear's Club, Clubhouse.



by nineteen miles long, is a delightful place to bask in the Gulf Stream and enjoy the best deep-sea fishing around – Hobe Sound is the brain-child of Bob Whitley and Tucker Frederikson of the Whitley Development Group.

The *Polo Magazine* met with Cotter Christian, Project Manager of the Hobe Sound Polo Club who explained:

"We're better known for developing up-scale golf courses, like Jack Nicklaus' The Bear's Club in Jupiter. Whitley is known for having created some of the finest golf course communities in the US, so although we hadn't done polo before, when the idea came to us, we quickly recognised that our golf expertise could be readily applied to producing first class polo grounds of international standard and an exceptional equestrian oriented community."

Christian added: "At 1,750 acres, along with an additional 2,800 acres nearby, the purchase of the land at Hobe Sound, in 2006, was the largest land deal in dollars that we had ever done. We obviously believe strongly that Hobe Sound is destined to be the next great place in South Florida."

Just over two years on, the five polo grounds are all down and, having been fastidiously laser-graded, are of the highest playing standard.

So good are they in fact, that not only is Adolfo Cambiasso one of Hobe Sound founding owners and members, but the All-American polo team practised there, away from prying English eyes in the run-up to The Westchester Cup as well as the USA team for the Comancho Cup.

Only a total of 77 properties, each with their own 20 acres, are being sold and with a mix of horse-friendly trails bordering each property and excellent configuration of bridledways, linking to an adjacent 8,000 acre State Park, the 50-year equestrian covenant stipulating equestrian use seems certain to ensure that the owners will all be like-minded."

To be able to lead your ponies to polo just a few minutes walk away from home, play a full game and then lead them home again is surely polo utopia – what better way to stretch their legs after a hard game?

If you ever did get polo-ed out then you could either nip to The Breakers, for a fabulous sample of the Maui Maui Oscar or Crab Claws in their great seafood restaurant, just yards from the sea, where the bar is actually a beautiful fish tank. Or, drive just minutes south of Hobe Sound, to Palm Beach Gardens and indulge in Cartier, Gucci... again!

If you're more inclined for a cheeky Bloody Mary or two, then nip into the Players Bar at IPC, where everyone hangs out post-chukkas after the big games. The best place to be seen is on a barstool at the outdoor bar where the Novillo Astradas' hang out when they're in town, and, where we found many an England player celebrating their Westchester win!

Palm Beach is a truly great place for polo and holidaying and any polo aficionado should tick it off their 'must-go' list. With year-round sunshine, high 26 goal polo on offer and Carlos Gracida and Julian Hipwood as residents, what's not to like?!

The Breakers Hotel

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www.thebreakers.com

And a special summer offer for readers of *The Polo Magazine*!

Valid from May 26th to September 30th 2009, The Breakers are offering rates from \$199 per room, per night plus exclusive welcome amenity. Reserve online at www.thebreakers.com or call 001 561 659 8440. Please quote promotion code: PB10A

Virgin Atlantic flies from London Heathrow to Miami daily. Fares start from £279 including taxes and can be booked either online: www.virginatlantic.com or by calling: Reservations: 08705 747 747

Hobe Sound Polo Club

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