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Field of Dreams

With Tiger and NFL vets moving in, Baja Norte is back in the game

| By Jack Skelley | Photography by Peter Cooper |

Superstar athletes breathe the same oxygen as the rest of us, only more of it. That could explain the need of some to help create spacious golf and estate communities in the fresh air of unbounded Baja California.

Tiger Woods is the most high-profile example. Plans for Punta Brava (“Wild Point”), 65 miles south of San Diego, include transfiguring endless ocean views into his first oceanfront course design: “Many of the holes are framed by natural rock outcroppings, steep cliffs and crashing waves. So I’ve designed 17 tees or greens on the water and eight holes that play over the ocean,” Woods said recently.

Besides Woods’ 18-hole course, Punta Brava (developed by the Flagship Group) promises 40 estate lots, 80 villa residences, and a 20-villa private hotel, with designs by Mexican architect Ricardo Legorreta, who’s known for his use of bold geometric forms in bright reds, purples and yellows.

Farther south, on the hidden bays and beaches north of Cabo San Lucas, retired NFL player Kyle Turley works with PCS Development’s 4,300-acre Bahía de los Sueños (“Bay of Dreams”). Once the New Orleans Saints’ titanic lineman, Turley now tackles ownership duties at his bay-view restaurant, El Cardón Tequila Bar and Grill. He urges other pros (including ex-Laker John Salley and Chiefs tight end Tony Gonzalez) to build

custom homes like his on rocky peninsulas, many with private coves.

“I’ve been telling my friends, the market is going south: Follow it,” says Turley.

The international resort feels far removed from glitzy Cabo: “If Cabo is the Las Vegas of Baja, then Bahía should be its La Jolla. This is Cabo before it was Cabo.”

That means untrammled beaches and seemingly endless sierras carpeted by cardón cactus, as well as plans for a chic hotel, beach club, and—set for June—a golf course by Tom Doak (known for his designs at Bandon Dunes, Oregon). The bay itself, sheltered by the mountains, is one of Baja’s calmest and a favorite port for big-game fishing on the Sea of Cortez. Nearby is the only living coral reef in western North America, teeming with tropical fish.

With room to move, a typical day for Turley means: “Wake up, work out, drive to my restaurant for breakfast, make sure everything is up and running, mingle with the early birds, grab my stand-up paddle board, paddle the bay for an hour, eat lunch, wait for the wind to pick up, grab my kite-surfing gear, jump on my boat with the boys, head out for some open-water kite surfing, clean up at home, and go back to the restaurant for dinner and a potential jam session around the beach fire.”

So that’s what “retirement” is like. **R**



OFF SEASON Bahía de los Sueños is the latest development north of Cabo, courtesy of former NFL-er Kyle Turley. Next up? A Tiger course is slated 65 miles south of San Diego.

