



Carne's fabulous golf can now be booked at the click of a mouse.

Carne links with BRS Golf for internet booking

Over the last few years, Irish golf has contributed enormously to the economic renaissance of Ireland. The North and West coast of Ireland possesses a remarkable number of Championship-standard links courses, both old and new, and eleven of their best have formed the North and West Coast Links marketing group (www.northandwestcoastlinks.com).

The Group includes eight - Royal Portrush, Castlerock, Ballyliffin, Donegal, County Sligo, Enniscrone, Connemara and Carne - that are now using the BRS Golf Internet booking system as a key part of their marketing, the aim being to make things really easy for the golfers anywhere in the world to book a tee time at any or all of these fabulous links courses.

Carne golf links

Just because you haven't heard of it, or that it's relatively new, doesn't mean that a course is any less amazing for what it has to offer. Carne Golf Links was voted No. 28 in the world's best courses by Golf World; it lies in magnificent unspoiled sand dunes overlooking Blacksod Bay and the wild Atlantic Ocean near Belmullet Co. Mayo in the west of Ireland. The last links course to be designed by the late Eddie Hackett, Carne is now believed by many who have played it to be his greatest challenge. "Although this is really a hidden gem and it doesn't enjoy the sort of reputation of say a Ballybunion, the dunes here make those at Ballybunion look like small hillocks" (Golf World, Nov. 2005).

Carne is unusual in that it is not only relatively young - it opened in 1995 - but was built virtually by hand over a six year period by 27 local farmers on land bought from them in the 1980's. Aimed at tourism golf, 90% of its income comes from visitors, so pulling in the green fees is essential. The weekday green fees are €55 (a third of the fees for

the best known golf courses in Ireland), and to maximise the online opportunities for attracting visitors, Carne has just installed a BRS Golf Internet booking system.

"The online tee sheet is much more efficient."

This application has been integrated into Carne's website (www.carngolflinks.com) and can be found quite easily on the left of their Home Page. Eamon Mangan is one of Carne's Directors, and has already found the BRS system is starting to pay for itself. "We used to take bookings by 'phone, e-mail and hand-written notes using a paper-based time sheet and diary. We'd tried an online system, but it wasn't developed sufficiently for our requirements, and lacked a tee sheet. We needed a desktop system, and in particular, we needed management reports that we could download, and check usage, capacity, forecast income, etc."

"Without any marketing other than the North and West Coast website, we're already seeing one booking every day for visitors. It's so much easier for the girls on the front desk to take calls and use the online system to capture all the details of our visitors on the system. In

turn, that builds our own visitor and therefore marketing database, which the BRS system enables us to send group e-mails to."

Online = much more efficient

"The online tee sheet is much more efficient too, especially when you need to check if you've got 10-15 successive tee times available for a group booking. You couldn't do that in the old paper diary."

"Carne, being part of the North and West Coast Links marketing group, was encouraged to look at the BRS system, the thinking being that if we all had the same system, it would make life much easier for visitors arranging trips to each of our courses, and of course, for those with the job of managing things on a daily basis."

BRS - a good decision

"It's proved a good decision; the system's very user-friendly and the training was so straightforward, it could be done over the 'phone by Brian Smith talking our girls through things while they were online. It's also very reliable; there's been no downtime, a point which concerned us after our previous experience."

"We're starting to see strong international interest from golfers not just in Ireland, but from the UK, Europe and the USA. I have no hesitation in recommending the BRS Golf internet booking system. We're very happy with it and it has everything that we wanted."