



The 11th green at the Black Pearl at Pristine Bay on Roatán is an island unto itself.

## Making a Splash in Roatán

The Honduran island gets a big-name golf course

BY JOE BARGMANN

**N**ORMALLY IN THIS SPACE we feature one golf course and recommend another in the same destination. This month we're limited to one because it's the only course on the island. But it's worthy of the solo spotlight.

The **Black Pearl at Pristine Bay** ([pristinebayresort.com](http://pristinebayresort.com), 786.315.8657) is pure, laid-back, island-golf joy. As I write this, the turf is still maturing on the final six holes, and the course is scheduled to open in November. What that means is that the future site of a ma-

JOR resort is currently occupied only by 18 unspoiled, sun-soaked holes. Translation: Make your travel plans now.

Located on Roatán, an eyebrow-shaped sliver of paradise off the mainland of Honduras, the course bears Pete Dye's signature, but it was a collaboration between Dye and his son Perry. Like his father, Perry believes golf is meant to be fun. Black Pearl's fun comes in the form of exhilarating water views and a mix of design features hewing to the terrain. The waterside holes are

links-like, while most of the others are carved into the jungle.

"It's what I call bohemian golf—the architecture is relaxed," Perry Dye says. "For instance, I left a few trees in the middle of fairways, just for giggles."

The 11th hole is a par-3 designed with a wink. It has an island green, like the infamous, Pete Dye-designed 17th hole on the Stadium Course at TPC Sawgrass, in Florida. But while that hole is torturous, Black Pearl's 11th is, well, fun. Shots that narrowly miss the mark roll into the sand surrounding the green and often end up half-submerged in water.

"People love hitting that shot," the younger Dye says, laughing. "You get some water and sand on your shorts, but so what? You're playing an island green on a Caribbean island!"

**Getting There:** Continental offers nonstop service to Roatán from its hub in Houston and seasonal service from New York/Newark.