

# Golf Digest

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## > FREE UP YOUR SWING FOR LONGER, STRAIGHTER SHOTS WITH Y.E. YANG (THE MAN WHO TOOK DOWN TIGER)

### BREAK 80 REALLY TOUGH LIES

### ECO-GOLF THE GAME'S GREENEST RESORTS

### 10 RULES MICHAEL JORDAN ON WINNING

### PLUS THE BEST GOLFER ATHLETES



**HOT PLAYER'S IRONS** P. 59

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LONG  
DRIVES

MATTHEW RUDY / CADILLAC SRX

## NO TRUNK, NO JUNK

**A**FTER SIX HOURS ON a plane, breaking the hermetic seal in smells-good, 75-and-sunny Southern California always prompts me to wonder the same thing:

*Why doesn't everybody live here?*  
That lasts only until I pull

out of the LAX garage in a fierce-looking black Cadillac SRX crossover and get on the expressway, headed for a four-day, 400-mile golf trip from Newport Beach to Monterey.

Everybody already does live here. And they're all trying to go south on the 405.

Thankfully it's only 50 miles to the Resort at Pelican Hill, outside Newport Beach—and a dramatic departure from the

gridlock a few minutes from the front gate. Pelican Hill is more of a gated-community-for-the-day than a conventional hotel. You stay in free-standing limestone- and marble-appointed bungalows or villas that stud the 504-acre property and migrate to the central restaurants and spa when you need civilization. It's not cheap. Bungalows start at \$695 a night, and a two-bedroom villa runs \$1,450. But

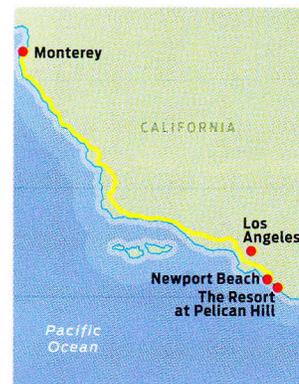
**Cadillac's SRX fits right in on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills.**

you don't have to be a resort guest to get a temporary slice of the OC lifestyle.

Tom Fazio built the 36-hole Pelican Hill Golf Club in the early 1990s, and he came back in 2005 for a buff and polish. Now, you can play the 6,945-yard Ocean North with its panoramic



Pelican Hill's Pacific views rival those of Pebble Beach.



## VITAL STATISTICS

**THE TRIP** Newport Beach to Monterey, Calif., via the Pacific Coast Highway: 391 miles.

**THE CAR** Cadillac's six-cylinder, 265-hp 2010 SRX crossover. Front-wheel-drive models start at \$33,330. I tested the Performance version with 20-inch wheels, navigation, backup camera and automatic rear hatch. Cost: \$42,175.

**THE COURSES** The Resort at Pelican Hill has two recently retooled Tom Fazio designs: Ocean North (★★★★½) and Ocean South (★★★★), \$235 for each. The North has the views and forced carries; the South is for shotmaking.

ocean views, wide fairways and forced carries, or the 6,580-yard Ocean South, which zigzags through eucalyptus stands and gorges. Your \$235 green fee gets you treated like a superhero for a day—and a forecaddie to help you find your ball when, not if, it finds the gorse.

Ocean North deserves its comparisons to Pebble Beach (at almost half the price) for its watery finishing holes, and the banana-shaped, 558-yard 17th is the most memorable. Y.E. Yang might have a super-high, 210-yard approach shot in his bag, but I don't, so I didn't challenge the deep ocean inlet and necklace of bunkers between my ball and the green. That didn't stop me from clicking away with my cell-phone camera at the 180-degree Pacific Ocean backdrop.

It's best not to get too road-ragey about the peculiar vehicular metrics that define greater Los Angeles, but the hour and a half it takes to fight my way out of Newport Beach and north through L.A. gives me plenty of time to survey the latest Caddy merchandise—and to play with all the navigation doohickeys that work only when

you're moving less than three miles per hour.

The benchmark for the SRX's category of crossovers is the Lexus RX350, which has been spreading virally through suburban garages since 1998. Cadillac has never offered a credible competitor for the ubiquitous Japanese jellybean, even counting the previous iteration of the SRX.

Cue a complete redesign for 2010. The old model looked like a slab-sided afterthought: a wagon tail grafted onto the business end of a lifted CTS sedan. This new SRX is a total fox, with angular sheet metal, a raked roof line and even a pair of mini-tailfins incorporated into the light assemblies. In a sea of soft-edged, sneaker-shaped grocery-getters, the striking SRX stands out like Lady Gaga at a church picnic.

Plenty of real cows gave their hides for Escalade-era Cadillac interiors, but prodigious use of plastic and pretend chrome didn't exactly reinforce the luxury-brand identity. If the SRX is an indication, Caddy's blingtastic plastic days are over. Soft-touch materials abound

in the spacious cabin, and the walnut-accented dash glows a pale blue with elegant Mac-like computerized displays. The back seats fold flat to provide enough spread-out room for a game of Yahtzee under the massive two-panel sunroof. If somebody gets too rowdy with the dice, you can click a button on the key fob and raise the back hatch automatically to eject the miscreant. Leave the seats up, and the floor in the rear opens to reveal a plastic-lined ice chest perfect for stowing your favorite bottle of Boekenooegen Northern California pinot noir.

The only off note comes from under the hood. Instead of the fantastic direction-injection, 300-horsepower V-6 of the CTS, the SRX makes do with a 265-horse relative—lesser but still decent in a Janet versus Michael Jackson way. Approaching 25 miles per gallon on the highway is a noble achievement, but the 4,200-pound SRX gets winded when the accelerator pedal goes down more than halfway.

Not that I would need to do that until I was clear of L.A. Just over halfway up to Monterey, in San Luis Obispo, you have the option to stay on Highway 101 or peel off onto the mostly two-lane Highway 1, through Big Sur. The coast route adds at least an hour to the trip, but it's a detour

you have to make at least once. Highway 1 clings to the cliffsides adjacent to Los Padres National Forest like white cat hair on a black sweater, and leaning the surprisingly nimble SRX into the low-speed curves in the sparse midday traffic—windows down, satellite radio cranking—is a delight. The plentiful dirt turnout areas along the 90-mile stretch of road between San Simeon and Carmel make it easy to pause and stretch your legs—and get a nosebleed from the thousand-foot elevation above the surf.

Cruising into Monterey in advance of the annual Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance car show, I snap out of my '90s on 9 reverie when the SRX's disembodied navigation-lady voice warns me about a problem on my chosen route.

Heavy traffic.

Maybe I'll see somebody I know.

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PLASTIC DAYS ARE OVER.