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Norman Estates at Rancho San Lucas, Mexico



SHARK TALE

FROM A STELLAR CAREER IN GOLF TO GOLF COURSE CONSTRUCTION AND GREAT WHITE SHARK ENTERPRISES, GREG NORMAN CONTINUES TO EVOLVE. NOW THE MAN AND HIS BRAND, THE GREG NORMAN COMPANY, ARE BUILDING SOME OF THE MOST STYLISH RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES IN THE WORLD WRITES TOM HYDE.

Growing up in Queensland, Greg Norman surfed, dived, camped and hiked. He was always on the go, and he still is.

Today he drives bulldozers, flies helicopters, rides horses at his Colorado Ranch and spearfishes off his yacht, *Aussie Rules*. He swims with whales in French Polynesia, goes on safari in Africa and hikes mountain trails in Bhutan.

Looking back, however, it was the simple act of caddying for his mother, a single-figure handicap golfer, that gave him a clear direction. He was 16 when, instead of picking out a club for Mum, he picked one out for himself and discovered he could hit a golf ball well enough to keep at it, and in short order his life changed forever.

It took him just two years to become a scratch player and just four tournaments to win his first professional trophy. He was 21 when he headed overseas for the first time, to play in a tournament in California and, as the saying goes, he never looked back.

He won 91 tournaments worldwide, was the No. 1 player in the world for 331 weeks, won two (British) Open Championships and was the runner-up twice at each of the other three Majors. He captured 20 US PGA Tour titles and was the first player to surpass \$10 million in earnings. This was before the coming of Tiger Woods, when television ratings for golf soared and the prize money went through the stratosphere.

Norman turned from playing golf courses to building them and today, Greg Norman Golf Course Design (GNGCD) has built more than 100 courses in 31 countries. His courses have won a host of awards, often for their environmental design. "Sustainability" is an important word in his vocabulary and "least disturbance" a motto.

At some point along his remarkable journey from Queensland to the world, Greg Norman discovered something important about himself; that he was not just a famous golfer, he was a brand that could be applied to a host of activities.

That discovery led first to the formation of Great White Shark

Enterprises and then, not long after buying a 12 per cent share in Cobra Golf for \$1.9 million and selling it five years later for \$40 million, he formed the Greg Norman Company.

Bill Moss, a former senior executive of Macquarie Bank, who worked with him to set up his early ventures, told one magazine: "Working and travelling with Greg, I soon realised he was a very deep thinker and a most sincere and generous person who, without any fuss or publicity, was a committed philanthropist and behind-the-scenes benefactor of many worthy causes. Greg had one lasting influence on me: a philosophy of life that was summed up by his famous motto, 'Attack Life'."

Just as he had an intuitive feel for golf, he had the same for business. From the many reports on his companies found online, it's clear that the secret of his success is twofold. First, his innate desire for adventure — instilled in him as a kid growing up in Queensland — and second, his courage in the face of failure.

Like his collapse at the 1996 Masters where, in the wake of a heartbreaking loss to Nick Faldo, and having to front up to media afterwards, he was nothing but class. "I think it's important to embrace failure," he once said.

Of course, there's more to his story than that. His willingness to be hands on, to listen and to learn and perhaps most of all, his outwardly attention to detail. He's engaged and engaging. He's not a celebrity to attach his name to a product and walk away. That's probably why the success of Greg Norman Golf Course Design morphed

almost naturally into the Greg Norman Company, one that today encompasses a wide range of activity from apparel and eyewear to hospitality, wine and steaks.

On that count, we note his Australian Grille. It's a restaurant on the waterfront at Barefoot Landing in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, that features a wood-grilled style of cooking and a menu of various cuts of beef, lobster and other seafoods. Including, of course, shrimp on the barbie. Only here it's a little fancier than that. As the menu has it: "Wood-grilled shrimp over parmesan and asiago-infused creamy polenta covered with

THE SECRET OF NORMAN'S SUCCESS IS TWOFOLD. FIRST, HIS INNATE DESIRE FOR ADVENTURE — INSTILLED IN HIM AS A KID GROWING UP IN QUEENSLAND — AND SECOND, HIS COURAGE IN THE FACE OF FAILURE.



The Norman Design Group created exclusive interiors for Rancho San Lucas.





KN Links Cam Ranh, Vietnam

bacon shaved sprouts and finished with tomato bacon gravy.”

The wine list at Greg Norman’s Australian Grill has received the Wine Spectator Award of Excellence for more than ten years straight. It’s about detail. And then there’s design.

The Norman Design Group works closely with Greg Norman Developments and together the two companies have built, and continue to build, some of the finest branded golf communities in the world.

According to his website, “Greg Norman Real Estate (GNRE) is an integrated international real estate development firm focused exclusively on high-end luxury developments and golf courses. Norman and his team take a hands-on approach to provide services throughout the entire process from project envisioning, site planning, marketing and sales to interior and architectural design.”

“The interior design arm of the business, the Norman Design Group, creates exclusive interiors and architecture for Greg Norman branded residential communities. The firm delivers clear

and cohesive design concepts that are a natural continuation of Greg’s distinctive style, ensuring that brand concept extends seamlessly from a project’s golf course, to the model villas, to the clubhouse and beyond.”

Kirsten Eulenhoefer, the designer of smart interiors for the Fairmont Nile City hotel in Cairo and the Park Hyatt Hotel in Zurich, had made it on her own before she met and married Greg, in 2010. Since then she’s become the head of the Norman Design Group for the company’s attractive residences and interiors.

In March this year, the company announced the debut of a real estate and lifestyle community called Norman Estates at Rancho San Lucas, in Los Cabos, Mexico. It’s an 834-acre development, in partnership with Solmar Hotels & Resorts of Cabo San Lucas. It has 1.2 miles of beachfront on the Pacific Coast and is framed by a Greg Norman Signature Golf Course.

Norman Estates is a private, gated enclave within Rancho San Lucas containing 32 estate homes and 36 condominiums.

The beachside homes are priced from \$3.5 to \$7 million and owners have access to a members-only beach club.

The company also has a major project ongoing in Florida. Medalist Village is a private residential golf community in Hobe Sound. Estate homes start at \$1 million. It’s surrounded by 870 acres of untouched Florida preserve with only 119 residences for the kind of privacy and escape not found elsewhere in South Florida. The master plan includes a Norman-designed par-3 golf course, two Har-Tru tennis courts, a world-class spa and fitness facility, and a distinctive Aussie Pub that’s no doubt a bit of an upgrade on the pubs he knew in Queensland.

Greg Norman Developments, a subsidiary of the Greg Norman Company, lists nine others golf and residence projects to its credit, some of those readers of this magazine will be familiar with. Pelican Waters and Brookwater in Queensland, The Vintage and Stonecutters Ridge in New South Wales and Settler’s Run in Victoria. Others are in the US and there’s one, The Eye of Africa, in South Africa.

It’s a testament to the breadth of the company’s design work that those planned communities are categorically different from its ‘branded residences,’ which represent Greg’s foray into designing and building luxury homes. These eye-popping “Norman Estates” residences incorporate his personal touch, none more so than the latest 68-home enclave on the beach in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. Others have been developed across the globe, from California to Vietnam.

Since ‘design’ became as important a notion in his mind as ‘sustainability’, ‘least disturbance’ and ‘Attack Life,’ Greg Norman the man and Greg Norman the brand have merged in a way unlike any other sportsperson, not to ignore the branding Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus achieved in their post-playing days.

It really boggles the mind to think that a young man from the outback mining town of Mount Isa could achieve all of this. Greg Norman’s story ought to give hope for every youngster from our part of the world, no matter his or her background. ■