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The pastel-colored houses are just one reason why John Byrwa is finding Bermuda so enchanting. (Photo: The PGA of America)

Postcard from Bermuda: 10 reasons to love it here

John Byrwa went to the PGA Grand Slam of Golf for the major champion shootout, of course. But from the pop-star premier to an eye-opening new libation, he keeps finding more to like everywhere he looks at the Grand Slam's new home.

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By John L. Byrwa, Managing Editor

TUCKER'S TOWN, Bermuda -- With all due respect to David Letterman, what follows are the top 10 reasons why Bermuda and Mid Ocean Club have been to this point the perfect new home for the PGA Grand Slam of Golf:

No. 10: Bermuda shorts and knee socks. Here on the island, it is considered formalwear for a man to don hot pink Bermuda shorts, black nylon knee socks, black dress shoes, a starched white dress shirt, a red necktie and a royal blue blazer. Anywhere else and he would draw stares and snickers. Here he looks downright smashing, and is proud of it. In fact, you're the one who draws stares and snickers when you attend a nice dinner and don't sport the above-mentioned wardrobe. (Trust me on that one.)

No. 9: A pop-star Premier. Where else can you go and find the leader of a free country -- albeit a country that's only approximately 22 square miles in total area -- out milling about with the common folk? No massive security detail, no armed guards in dark sunglasses whispering into walkie-talkies, no huge entourage, just the Honorable Dr. Ewart Frederick Brown and a discreet assistant out walking among the people, shaking hands and talking to anyone who approaches. He even remembers your name the next day. (Trust me on that one, too.)

No. 8: A Dark 'n Stormy. No, not a nighttime thunderstorm but the most refreshing -- and dangerous -- adult beverage you've ever tasted. Take one clean tumbler, fill it with ice, pour in 2 ounces of Gosling's Black Seal Rum and 8 ounces of Ginger beer (I pray I can find both somewhere in the States), add a thick slice of lemon and you have yourself a Dark 'n Stormy. The national drink of Bermuda, a Dark 'n Stormy goes down way too easy and packs a powerful punch. (Definitely trust me on that.)

No. 7: A great golf course. Poipu Bay Golf Course in Kauai, Hawaii, the PGA Grand Slam of Golf's acclaimed home for the previous 13 years, and postcard pretty in its own right, has nothing on Mid Ocean Club. Playing to 6,666 yards for this championship (some of our more faith-based fans might think they should have added at least one yard to 10 of the holes), Mid Ocean Club is a jewel that features striking views of the Atlantic Ocean, slick and undulating Bermuda greens, incredible elevation changes and ever-changing winds.

No. 6: Little pink houses. And lime green ones, and ocean blue ones and just about every other cool pastel color you can think of. All with stepped bright white limestone roofs that also serve to collect rainwater for later consumption. Because city-provided water reaches only a small portion of the island, each house in Bermuda comes with a reservoir and purification system under it that supplies its residents with fresh water.

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No. 5: Little pink beaches. Well, the sand isn't really that pink but it definitely has a pinkish hue. Formed from the finely pulverized remains of calcium carbonate shells and skeletons of invertebrates such as corals, clams, forams and other shells, Bermuda's beaches are among the most beautiful in the world. And the crystal-clear bathwater-warm water that laps up against them with hypnotic regularity practically begs you to come in and take a dip. (Again, trust me on that.)

No. 4: Those cute scooters. Because national law limits cars to one per household, most Bermudians get around on motor scooters. They're an easy, fun and cheap way to navigate the narrow streets that snake through the island. Forget that most of the scooter drivers don't obey the traffic laws, or that when you drive one it's best to say a prayer and a few rosaries before setting off.

No. 3: The food. Because Bermuda's population of 65,000 is made up of a wide variety of nationalities -- everyone wants to live in paradise, don't they? -- one can find just about any type of food they crave. I recommend Bacci's, a nice Italian joint within walking distance of the Fairmont Southampton Hotel. I also recommend the sausage-filled cannelloni.

No. 2: Great galleries. Tuesday's opening round was attended by some 6,000 knowledgeable and enthusiastic fans who lined the fairways and at times sounded like 60,000. I'm guessing attendance was twice as much as last year in Hawaii. If you know who had been here, the place would have been packed.

And the No. 1 reason Bermuda and Mid Ocean Club are to this point the perfect new home for the PGA Grand Slam of Golf: Location, location, location. I'll take a 2-hour direct plane ride from Atlanta over a 12-hour, three-stop trek across the country and Pacific Ocean any day. Trust me.

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