

B I L L I O N A I R E

Culture

Join The Club



The equestrian facilities at Albany, part of the Nexus Collection.

Inside nine of the world's most intriguing - and exclusive - private members clubs.

Given that there are over 5,600 private members' clubs in the US alone, you might have thought we had reached overload. Not so. Today, private members' clubs are enjoying a second gilded age. More clubs have opened in the past four years than in the three decades following the 1985 opening of the iconic Groucho Club.

The pipeline of prospective openings is the largest it has ever been, a fact confirmed by Alasdair Pritchard and Hugh Dixon, Knight Frank Private Office Partners. Some still ban suits and ties, while others won't let you in without a jacket.

They aren't for everyone. As Groucho Marx once said to a Hollywood club that he'd just joined: "Please accept my resignation. I don't want to belong to any club that will accept me as a member."

A look at nine of the most intriguing and desirable private members' clubs, old and new.

Aman Private Members Club, New York, Bangkok, Tokyo

For New York's 0.1 per cent, this is the most exclusive ticket in town. With a fee of \$200,000 just to join, plus \$20,000 in annual dues, the Aman Club New York represents a new breed of ultra-exclusive giga clubs. The initial fee is a "legacy" once-a-lifetime payment, which can be passed on to family members. A representative declined to say how many members it has, other than it is an "intimate" circle.

Since 2022 when the cult hotel brand launched its members' club (members are referred to as 'founders'), there are now three global locations at which members get reciprocal benefits: Tokyo, Bangkok and New York (membership costs are slightly different in each location). Another 10 locations are in the pipeline. Members get access to the spa, a 25,000-square-foot, three-storey wellness Mecca, with a 20m indoor pool and integrative medical treatments.

Then there are cultural programmes such as art workshops and culinary masterclasses. But one of the most compelling benefits of membership is access to the Aman Private Office, a 24/7 concierge service run by the resort. “It’s for people who want to bring the Aman’s impeccable service into their day-to-day,” says a representative. The New York club is now wait-list only.

The club sits alongside the Asian-vibed, Jean-Michel Gathy-designed 83-suite hotel and 22 residences on the upper floors of the 1921 Beaux-Arts Crown building on the corner 57th Street and Fifth Avenue.

There is an expansive 7,000-square-foot roof terrace with a retractable roof that only hotel guests, residents and members can access. The two restaurants, Japanese Nama and Italian Arva, offer formal and casual dining options, respectively, and in the basement, the underground Jazz Club, decorated with pink cherry blossom branches, presents a unique sensory experience not to be missed.

Yacht Club de Monaco, Monaco

Arguably the most glamorous and sought-after private yacht club in the world, with 2,500 members representing 82 nationalities, the Yacht Club de Monaco (YCM) in Monte Carlo's Port Hercules, was founded in 1953 by Prince Rainier III. It was completely redesigned by Norman Foster in 2014 into a striking building resembling an ocean liner.

To become a member of the YCM one must be introduced by two sponsors who must be society members. A one-off initiation fee is said to be €27,000, while annual fees are undisclosed.

Beyond its role as a private club, the YCM also holds a public service delegation, contributing actively to the promotion of yachting in Monaco. Today, more than a third of the yachts on the list of the 100 largest in the world fly the YCM burgee.

Some events this year organised by the YCM include Monaco Energy Boat Challenge (July 1-5 2025), which aims to drive the energy transition for boats and build a cleaner future for yachting. Also, Monaco Classic Week (September 10-13 2025), a biennial event celebrating the heritage of classic yachting, which reunites in the same harbour classic sailing yachts, period motor-yachts and vintage powerboats.

The Explorers Club, global

What do Jeff Bezos, Theodore Roosevelt, John Glenn, Jim Fowler, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, Richard Branson, Sir Edmund Hillary, Buzz Aldrin and the Prince of Monaco all have in common?

They are, or were, all members of The Explorers Club, the private club set up to support scientific missions that was incorporated in New York in 1904. Today, the headquarters is in the Upper East Side of Manhattan, New York. The building is a Jacobean revival mansion that was originally built for Stephen Clark. The Explorers Club purchased the building in 1965. Women were first admitted in 1981, with a class including Sylvia Earle and Kathryn Sullivan, and the club has been actively trying to diversify its membership ever since, with other high-profile female members, including Jane Goodall, Carol Beckwith and Anna Roosevelt.

Richard Wiese, current president, calls The Explorers Club “Hogwarts for adults” and that when like-minded explorers join, they realise they’ve “found their tribe”.

The Explorers Club has 30 chapters around the world from Bhutan to Poland, to Texas, which serve as local contact points for explorers, scientists and students. Chapters hold monthly dinners, lectures and seminars, award field-research grants to students, publish newsletters and organise expeditions, field trips and educational events.

With a global membership today of nearly 4,000 comprised from over 60 countries, becoming a member requires documented scientific expeditions and a sustained interest in exploration. Sponsorship by existing members is needed. Annual dues range from \$1,645 to \$85, for students.

Tiger 21, global

Tiger 21 is a members-only peer advisory organisation for ultra-high-net-worth wealth creators and preservers to learn and share their experiences. Founded in 1999, it has more than 1,600 members across the globe who collectively manage approximately \$200+ billion in personal assets.

Groups consist of 12-15 members that meet each month in 50+ cities across the US, Canada, Switzerland, the UK, Portugal, Singapore, and Dubai, with new groups in formation in Bengaluru, Mumbai and Milan. Members are mostly first-generation entrepreneurs who started their own businesses and had to learn how to manage their finances on their own after a liquidity event.

The minimum threshold for membership is a minimum of \$20 million in investable assets. Membership is by invitation-only and the membership fee is \$33,000 a year with a one-time \$5,000 initiation fee.

Tiger 21 family office groups were also recently launched as a subset to bring together members who manage large, multi-generational assets and face distinct challenges, often far different from those of traditional investors.

Family office groups meet separately from our traditional or core groups. The agendas of the meetings are more focused on the challenges and opportunities that principals of family offices face, and the schedule is different from the full-day monthly meetings that core groups have. Membership in the family office group is a \$50,000 fee per year with a one-time \$5,000 initiation fee.

Nexus Luxury Collection, Bahamas, New York, London

Billed as the first and only global private members' club for families, Nexus Luxury Collection was founded by a consortium of A-listers, including Tiger Woods, Justin Timberlake, and the Tavistock Group owned by Joe Lewis, the billionaire who once backed Tottenham Hotspur.

Its first presence was in New Providence, Bahamas in 2010, at 600-acre luxury private resort community Albany, featuring an Ernie Els-designed golf course, a super yacht marina, and private homes.

Next came the private members' club of Nexus Club New York in Tribeca, Manhattan, complemented by T-Squared Social in Mid-Town, a sports bar and restaurant open to the public.



This year saw the opening of the first European property, Nexus Club London in South Kensington, in a Georgian building once home to Ronnie Wood's Harrington Club, redesigned by Squire & Partners.

All Nexus properties have a strong focus on health, wellness and fitness, with some of the best doctors, personal trainers and aestheticians available to Nexus members. Dalton Wong, performance coach, personal trainer and nutritional expert to the stars is overseeing the offering at Nexus Club London.

Staying true to its mantra of catering to families of all ages, Nexus Club London provides sports simulators, a games room, comfortable lounge spaces, and a dedicated space for children and teenagers to hang out in.

Annual membership in London costs £8,600 + VAT, covering the spouse and all family members up to the age of 40. This also includes a \$5,000 credit for a stay at The Albany, Bahamas.

Auric Room 1915, Montana

Named after the year that Lone Mountain Ranch, in Big Sky, Montana, was homesteaded as a cattle ranch by Clarence Lytle, this is a gorgeous, richly decorated room filled with antiques and treasures from the ranch's early beginnings. Members can enjoy supper with private booths, banquettes, an intimate bar, private kitchen and cigar terrace with sweeping views of Lone Mountain Ranch.

Designed by Eric Cheong of N45 Projects, the club's decor emphasises its heritage, with rustic reclaimed oak flooring and a thick black marble bar, and focus on the details, such as barware sourced from Hermès Saint-Louis, custom China from Bernardaud and silver from Christofle. The entire team is outfitted in custom uniforms by Janie Bryant, who was responsible for the costumes in the popular Yellowstone series prequels.

The culinary vision is wide and the menu ranges from tomato soup with truffle grilled cheese to Wagyu beef katsu sando, bison Milanese and more. It cherry-picks its suppliers, such as a partnership with family-owned Little Bell Cattle, a local company founded by combat veterans and using regenerative ranching practices. It also has a rare whiskey and wine-collecting programme.



Briland Club, Harbour Island, Bahamas

Briland, the nickname for Harbour Island, is where Briland Club took its name. Considered 'The Hamptons of the Bahamas', Harbour Island is a pint-sized, 3.5-mile long, 1.5-mile island known for its pink sand beaches and pretty pastel-coloured villages. The conch salad at Queen Conch is also not to be missed. Over the next nine months, members-only Briland Club will come to life. A renewable energy-powered marina-and-residences club on 27 acres with a hotel, it will be the only mega-yacht marina on the island. Of the 43 slips, 28 will be big enough for mega-yachts up to a maximum length of 300 foot. The initial initiation fee is \$150,000 and then \$30,000 annually thereafter, while prices for two-bedroom residences will start from \$3.55m - residents automatically get membership. The clubhouse will be set within the carefully-renovated gorgeous, faded façade of the local 'haunted house', it will comprise amenities from a mahjong room to a state-of-the-art spa.

Shell Bay, Hallandale Beach, Florida

Led by visionary real estate development firms **Witkoff** and **PPG**, Shell Bay is a private club and residential destination in Hallandale Beach, with The Shell Bay Club anchored by a 7,250-yard Greg Norman designed private, championship golf course.

The Shell Bay Club opened in October 2023 and has some of the country's highest initiation fees at \$1.35 million, and is the first new private club to open in Miami in more than two decades. The course has a 12-acre practice facility, including a 9-hole Par 3 course and The Bays Golf Performance Lab, the newly-opened Racquet Club, with programming led by the all-time winning doubles players, the Bryan brothers, on grand-slam caliber European clay courts, pickleball, and padel courts; a 18,000-square-foot Spa and Wellness Center (coming soon); a Clubhouse with a 7,500-square-foot state-of-the-art, agnostic fitness center, locker rooms with spa-like amenities, indoor and outdoor dining, cocktail lounge, and lobby bar; and The Shell Bay Yacht Club with 48 slips, private charters, and excursions for sport and leisure.



Arrival at Shell Bay residence

Panther National, Palm Beach Gardens, Florida



President of Panther National, Swiss former alpine ski racer Dominik Senn

Swiss former alpine ski racer Dominik Senn envisioned and developed Panther National, which includes a championship golf course designed by golf champions Jack Nicklaus and Justin Thomas. Panther National has an initiation fee of \$500,000 and is one of the first modern golf and lifestyle community to debut in Palm Beach County in nearly two decades.

The Clubhouse, which broke ground in November 2024, is anticipated to open in late 2026. This 60,000 square-foot-facility will offer fine dining, wine and sports bars and a shop, and a welcoming courtyard complete with a fire pit. A Racquet Center featuring tennis, pickleball and padel courts is expected to open in early 2026, with a Wellness Center opening in Fall 2027, which will offer pools, spa, gym, dining area, pool bar, and cabanas.

A version of this article appeared in The Ambition Issue. To subscribe, click [here](#).