

On Course

Current News from Forrest Richardson & Associates, Golf Course Architects

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Answering the age-old question: DOES THE COST OF GREAT GOLF ALWAYS HAVE TO BREAK THE BANK?

*Olivas Links in California
with a budget under \$5 million*



ALL PHOTOS BY AIDAN BRADLEY

“I have always been of the belief that great ideas and designs transcend budgets,” says Forrest Richardson. “Design is about solving problems and finding the unique qualities of a site—to say that success is dependent on a big budget is one reason golf has suffered.”

Indeed, golf can become a costly endeavor for developer, operator and player when the “cost at all cost” approach has been taken. Since the golf boom

of the 1990s the failure rate of projects is staggering. The mantra “build it and they will pay whatever” is rarely accurate. Green fees and memberships that *have* to go up don’t leave much room for error or future adjusting.

“Our solution is to understand projects from a financial viewpoint, and to hold on to the premise that ‘less can be more’ when it is applied properly.”

A FEW IDEAS for SMART DESIGN

1. SITE SELECTION

Be sure to invest the time to consider all the options when it comes to what land to use.

2. GOOD PLANNING is an INVESTMENT

The cost of planning, when done properly, has the ability to save considerably down the road.

3. DON'T WAIT

Golf courses are among the largest components of a project—often taking the most land. The eyes of the golf course architect should be on the project earlier rather than later.

“The City of Ventura was wise when it put together its business plan... Instead of blindly following the 1990’s trend of appealing exclusively to an upscale constituency, the City listened to the consultants it retained.”

— THE PUBLIC LINKS
GOLF ALMANAC



Bunkers at Olivas Links are sparse, but by design. Clever hollows and a links style of contouring defines the challenge as opposed to over-bunkering.



Greens are constructed with pure sand instead of the complex method often relied upon during the “more is better” era.

A FEW of our LOW COST PROJECTS:

- THE HIDEOUT (18-hole new course in Utah): \$2.8 MILLION
- PEACOCK GAP (18-hole California Re-build): \$4.5 MILLION
- ARIZONA BILTMORE ADOBE (18-hole Restoration): \$1.8 MILLION
- BUENAVENTURA (18-hole California Re-build): \$3.4 MILLION
- LINKS at LAS PALOMAS (18-holes in Mexico): \$5.5 MILLION

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