



THE HOLE STORY: SUMMARISING OLIVEWOOD GOLF COURSE'S 18 HOLES

1ST Hole. Par 5. 505 metres

The first hole is a relatively soft Par 5 with a generous tree-lined fairway to ease golfers into the round. The tee lies at the highest point on the course, directly in front of the clubhouse lounge.

The tee shot provides a wonderful opportunity to open one's shoulders and the only hazard is some light rough to the left and right. The fairway narrows slightly at the 250 metre mark, edging gently down towards the green. Here the rough on the right thickens, falling into a gully that splits the first and second holes. Stray shots may result in a reload.

Aided by a tailing easterly wind, longer hitters will view this as a birdie opportunity but must beware of the small dam and a few well-placed bunkers that guard the elevated green. A north-westerly wind will complicate matters and average players would do well to be on the green in three shorts, with a par a definite bonus.

2nd Hole. Par 4. 328 metres

Stuart Mclean, Editor of Golf Digest, described the second fairway as "resembling a grass waterfall, gently cascading into the damn below". This is the intimidating impression golfers may get as they ready themselves for a tee shot that must pass over a deep gully with heavy bush on the right and the estate's largest dam on the left. However, a well hit drive should sail over the gap and could carry the ball towards the corner of the right-to-left dogleg, leading to an ample green.

A soaring right-hander's draw will end on the green or in its throat however too much right-to-left is likely to result in a lost ball.

3rd Hole. Par 4. 338 metres

The third hole's spacious fairway slopes slightly uphill, with dense bush on the left, light rough on the right and a series of well-placed bunkers to scupper those favouring safe shots. A large erythrina (coral) tree standing to the left of the fairway marks the start of a dogleg left.

The green is protected by bunkers on the front and left and a small damn to the rear. At first glance, the third hole – with its expansive fairway, light rough and large green – has birdie written all over it. However, in a few years OliveWood's tree-planting programme will add to the difficulty, as well as the beauty of this hole.



4th Hole. Par 4. 367 metres

From the fourth tee, an archway of trees confronts the golfer, framing the downhill fairway and three distant dams.

During the design of this hole the natural sweep of land was relied on to create the fairway. Past the third dam, the fairway slopes gently upwards to an elevated green. This is a great risk reward shot and, although big hitters can comfortably carry the first dam, the right-to-left slope of the fairway brings the other two into play.

Dominating the left side of the fairway is heavy bush and bamboo forest. The prudent approach is a short shot leaving the player ahead of the water, with an easy iron onto green.

5th Hole. Par 4. 368 metres

This is one of Olivewood's friendlier holes, especially on a warm and windless day. The first half is straight with a broad fairway and light rough on either side. The only hindrances are the fairway bunkers which may snag long hitters. As the course matures, the numerous sapling trees on either side of the fairway will add to the difficulty.

The large green is visible as the golfer reaches the start of the downhill slope. A small dam on the green's left and heavy bush at the rear awaits any errant shots.

6th Hole. Par 4. 386 metres

The scenic sixth tees run along the wall of a small dam towards a narrow fairway, which is shielded by a second dam to its left and guarded by bush on both sides. An over cautious approach shot may end in a small water hazard to the right of the green and, if an easterly wind is blowing, anything but a well struck drive will float left into the rough. The fairway broadens as it approaches the green, but slopes away steeply to the left and the rear.

Having navigated the challenges and completed the hole, golfers can relax and enjoy the spectacular views of Chintsa River and lagoon, way down the valley.

7th Hole. Par 3. 152 metres

Aside from being a great hole, the seventh also has a superb view of Chintsa lagoon and Chintsa East village, which extends down to the river and the beach. The large green, which lies well below the tees, gives the appearance of sitting up and welcoming well-struck shots.

As with many of the Olivewood's holes, on a windless day the seventh does not appear to hold any threats presenting a definite birdie opportunity. However, this can change dramatically when a strong wind is blowing.



While the green is large, steep banks to the left, right and rear of the hole threaten poor shots.

8th Hole. Par 5. 547 metres

The eighth tee complex is one of the most attractive features of this stunning hole. A long path along the side of a hill links the seventh green to the back tee, from here it switchbacks down to the other tees, then continues to drop onto the start of the fairway.

The shot from the top tee into an easterly wind can be intimidating, particularly with a bushed gully separating the tees from the fairway. Further down the fairway, a ditch effectively halves the hole. Even long hitters might struggle to clear this with their opening shot. A small dam on the left of the ditch adds to the difficulty. After passing these obstacles, the fairway flattens and leads to a slightly elevated green.

9th Hole. Par 4. 312 metres

The ninth tee is a short stroll from the eighth green. Instead of heading downhill towards Olivewood's lake the fairway does an about turn, winding its way back up the hill. At the apex of its climb, a mere lob shot to the green, the fairway gives the illusion of merging with the thirteenth, however it ducks down sharply before reaching the fairway, then

eases into a gradual slope onto the ninth green.

The first hazards are a series of bunkers to the right of the spacious fairway. Up to this point, the ninth could be considered rather easy but this perception changes with any over-hit shot. Behind the green is a steep bank leading to an old farm dam.

10th Hole. Par 5. 512 metres

Amen Corner is a name given to the renowned eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth holes, that can make or break any round, at Augusta National Golf Club in the USA, home to the Masters Tournament. Olivewood has its own version – made up of the tenth, eleventh and twelfth holes.

The tenth fairway is invitingly broad, with light rough on the right and several grassed berms to the left. The extended tongue of the lake runs along the first half of the fairway. The landing area for the better ball strikers narrows as rough and water converge.

The second portion of the fairway is more forgiving, widening as it gets closer to the green and bunkers. To the left is an open area, heading to the eleventh tee, while the right has a canal leading to a dam that borders the putting surface. Rough separates the green from the river behind it.

11th Hole. Par 3. 142 metres



The eleventh is definitely Olivewood's most charming hole, set alongside the river and backed by a bamboo forest and riverine bush. The green nestles up to the dam and has a bunker to its front.

The direct line of sight from tee to green is over the water, a daunting shot in any wind. For the less adventurous, a short fairway runs to the right, hugging the water's edge. While this is a safe bail out option for those not comfortable with crossing water, the fairway's bunkers towards the side of the green create their own dangers.

12th Hole. Par 4. 402 metres

After completing the eleventh hole, golfers make their way around the front of the dam, across a bridge and onto a peninsula tee complex. A stretch of water lies between the tees and the fairway but, although it might intimidate less competent golfers, this is more of a feature than a hazard.

While the landing area is extensive, the difficulty lies in the length which, at over 400 metres, is Olivewood's longest par 4. Compounding this is water to the left, made up of a series of small ponds, and Chintsa River to the right. In addition, the thickly grassed berms, separating the tenth and twelfth, also come into play.

The fairway narrows marginally as the golfer gets closer to the elevated green, with steep slopes at the centre and right.

13th Hole. Par 4. 241 metres

The thirteenth is the first of three linking holes that thread their way upwards back to the plateau. It is by far the steepest hole. From the tee, which overlooks the river plain, the hole doglegs its way sharply to the right. As this is a linking hole, the fairway has to rise sharply however, several flat areas allow for a level stance.

Tee-shots can range from a gentle prod to the nearest part of the wide fairway or cutting the corner and going for the green. Deep rough on the right makes the latter a brave choice. Standing on the green, it is worth pausing to admire the spectacular view down the valley to the river and the sea below.

14th Hole. Par 4. 355 metres

After the rigorous climb to the top of the thirteenth, a path from the green cuts through coastal bush and opens onto the spacious fourteenth fairway. The hole is a true golfing pleasure, both for its view and for its challenge.

The fairway resembles a wide green road, which climbs and curves gently upwards towards the elevated green. A resurrected stock dam lies on the left side of the fairway, but it is aesthetic rather than threatening.



On the right open areas of thorn scrub give way to thickly forested slopes. The large and welcoming green has gradual slopes and saplings that will one day shade the area.

15th Hole. Par 3. 142 metres

Olivewood's signature fifteenth hole is sure to remain in a golfer's memory long after the round is over.

The tee and green are on opposite slopes of a formidable, forested ravine, leaving one option for the tee shot - clear it or take another ball.

As a concession to the difficulty, the seniors' and ladies' tees push up closer to the edge of the drop, reducing the length of the first shot. The bunkers on the steep banks leading up to the green might be a hazard but they will also stop a mishit ball from winding its way down the hill into the stream.

Driving down the cart path and over the stream the hole sheds its fierceness. It is quiet, windless and cool, with an archway of trees shading the bridge that crosses the stream and connects tee to green.

16th Hole. Par 4. 340 metres

Were it not for its ruggedness, the sixteenth would be an almost perfect mirror image of the benevolent fourteenth. However, the tees are staggered at an acute angle to the fairway. The back tee may lure better golfers into taking on the demanding shot over the corner of the rough but anything too far left might wind up in a thickly forested drop. Despite the risks, with an easterly wind and a good strike, it is possible to fly over the hazard and land on the large green. Further challenges await in the form of twin ponds lying on the left of the fairway.

The sixteenth hole is an excellent example of the risk and reward philosophy that typifies many of Olivewood's holes.

17th Hole. Par 3. 158 metres

The 17th tees have panoramic vistas of the forth and eighteenth fairways, as well as the clubhouse, offices and restaurant in the distance.

This is a tricky, short par 3 – particularly on a windy day. While it is flat, with veld grass presenting the only trouble between the tee and the green's fringe, problems may begin to arise around the green.

Cleverly placed bunkers at the front and right of the putting surface will guzzle any short shot and anything pushed out to the right of the green may bounce down a slope towards the rough. However, a sweet shot over the bunker might also mean a birdie.



18th Hole. Par 5. 486 metres

Olivewood's closing hole is relaxed from start to finish providing a great way to end a round.

This par 5 is laden with opportunity – those wishing to protect their scores can play the hole conservatively, easing the ball up the fairway and to the green in three shots, others, intent on making up lost ground, can belt the ball down the fairway and try to get onto the green in two. However, the further the drive, the narrower the fairway, which eventually shrinks to a dozen or so metres, before again broadening.

An easterly wind should propel a really well-struck driver past the narrowing fairway and around a slight dogleg left, leaving an easy shot onto the bunker-guarded green.

Whatever the score, Olivewood's renowned 19th hole lies in wait behind the trees, offering celebrations or condolences.