

ESTORIL SOL RESIDENTIAL AL COMPLEX 2004-2010, Cascais – Portugal

Client ESTORIL SOL, Investimentos Hoteleiros, S.A.

Engineering Afaconsult (structures, installations, demolitions, *et al.*),
GAP – Gabinete de Arquitectura Paisagista (landscape), Engexpor -
Consultores de Engenharia S.A. (supervision)

Contractor Somague (engineering) + Edifer (construction)

Photography João Morgado

In the place where now is the *Estoril Sol* Residential Complex existed a former Hotel, that constituted a barrier between the hill and the *Palmela* Park, located North, and the marginal avenue and the access to the beach to the South. The set of the new buildings looks for a scenographic character and, simultaneously, the scale of Land Art through reformulating the relation between figure and background, and giving prominence to the place, understood in a dialoguing dimension between the landscape, the architectonic and the urban components.

The design rehearses the solution of several problems identified in the territory. There was a confrontation between scales in the surrounding area which compelled the new building to exhibit a self-referential character with roots on the Russian Constructivism architecture. With the demolition of the old Hotel, it rendered visible an altimetric difference of 30 meters between the hill of the *Castelhana* and the marginal avenue, but, for the first time in decades, the *Palmela* Park became visible from this avenue. This obeyed to design a gradual transition between the high level and the low level of the marginal avenue, creating a basement platform where the new set of buildings rests.

Below the level of this platform are located the parking areas and respective accesses, as well as commercial areas, benefiting from autonomous entrance from the street. Within this body, there is also a continuous pedestrian connection, which joins the interior areas and the backyard, constituting the backbone of the whole complex, while the main entrances of the housing complex are located south, next to the marginal avenue.

The emergent volumes are implanted according to a play alternating built volumes with voids in order to discover the green of the park and of the hill behind them. Starting from a rule of three regular bodies with square and identical plans, separated by similar distances, the volumes rise in two sets rotated according to the two main directions, the one given by the line of the *Castelhana* valley and reinforced by the line of the river, and the other given by the coast line.

Each volume is served by cores with a stairwell and two elevators, totalizing 110 apartments from one to five bedrooms types, some of which are arranged in duplex. Two of the volumes are connected by a bridge that, in addition to offering circulation areas between them, comprises some of the dwellings. The third volume, in turn, is autonomous from others, creating strong relations with the street.

The naturalized characterization of the public spaces seeks to extend the *Palmela* Park with a specific landscape project, ensuring the integration of outdoor leisure areas, including the pool area.

