

PROMONTORIO

CASA COOK HOTEL
SESIMBRA, PORTUGAL
2025–2018

The project comprises a small hotel and villas next to Meco, a beach village 35 km south of Lisbon, in the municipality of Sesimbra. With an area of 6.1 ha, the property boasts a thick forest of mature stone pines and cork trees, part of a wild and primordial landscape deemed to be one of the most arcane and unfathomable places on Lisbon's Atlantic coast. The rectangular 'fan-like' plot, served by two roads at each end, is topographically formed by two hills and a gentle valley facing east, with a maximum variance in grading of 20 m across its full length — nevertheless enough to create a sense of privacy between the various programme components.

The project is first and foremost an exercise in the study of topography and place-making. While a small part of the resort is purely dedicated to hospitality, for the most part it comprises a residential project that aims to create a community of permanent and temporary residents. The master plan is based on a central serpentine road that winds organically from the west main-entrance drop-off point, gently descending to the valley and up to the eastern end of the plot while springing secondary pathways to access the various clusters, the largest of which forms a 'shell' layout facing the valley.

The main building of the hotel, positioned as a lightweight pavilion at one of the resort's highest points, accommodates its key amenities and services, such as reception, lobby lounge, restaurant, bar, spa and gym, in addition to back-of-house areas (kitchen, staff, storage, loading bay, etc.). An embedded basement corridor leads to the terraced guestrooms and suites. The ensemble is completed by a set of 52 tourist villas with two, three and four bedrooms, distributed in three morphological typologies — patio villas, townhouses and forest villas— all of which were devised taking into account the topography, their relative position in the terrain, sun exposure, views and accessibility.

The patio villas, positioned in an amphitheatre-like arch, are partially terraced so as to receive light through a sunken patio, respectively from west or south. At the edge of each row, a single volume rises into the skyline to create an independent suite with direct access from the outside. The double-storey townhouses are located on the eastern edge of the plot, facing west. With their L-shaped plan, each forms an open courtyard to their adjacent unit. The upper floor has two suites and, as in the patio villas, also has exterior access. Finally, the forest villas are located at the heart of the resort, amidst the pines. Based on the jagged collision of four rectangular prisms — like in a Mikado game — and placed between stone pines, the ground floor contains the social areas of the house, in addition to three bedrooms, while the upper floor houses the master suite with access to a private terrace. The architectural language and materiality — with modest openings, walls in stained plaster, and green roofs — aim to achieve an idea of simplicity, with priority given to a type-form that seeks to fuse with the landscape, echoing the vernacular tradition and human scale of the nearby villages.



Location: Aldeia do Meco, Sesimbra, Portugal
Client: Falésias Elegantes Sociedade Imobiliária, SA
Scope of services: Architecture and landscape architecture
Project brief: Hotel resort and spa with 30 guestrooms and 52 villas
Plot area: 6.1 ha
Gross floor area: 11,750 sq. m (3,550 sq. m hotel, 8,200 sq. m villas)
Project status: 2018 (concept design) – 2025 (estimated completion)
Illustration: Promontorio