

PRO MON TORIO

OMBRIA HOTEL AND APARTMENTS
LOULÉ (ALGARVE), PORTUGAL
2024–2009

Quinta da Ombria is a property in the Algarve hinterland with 150 hectares. Surrounded by extensive citrus groves, fig and carob trees, small farms and villages, the dramatic landscape and the rich biodiversity of this mountainous estate comprise a watercourse and a series of archaeological remnants related to farming and its early waterworks. The resort comprises golf course, hotel and clubhouse, in addition to villas and other residential units.

The massing of the ensemble is topographically evocative of a cascading settlement that gently accommodates to the contours of the site in a series of 2- and 3-storey volumes broken down into different terraces imbedded in the mountain ridge. Devised in a village-like structure, the design springs from an existing and mandatory preliminary concept in order, the subject of an in-depth aesthetic and technical revision, not only to comply with complex environmental, legal and planning constraints, but also to eschew the predictable vernacular-pastiche of tourism commercial developments, and instead endowing it with a critical and cultural edge.

The simple pitched roof volumes that constitute most of the ensemble are inspired in Algarve's whitewashed villages and hamlets. The ground floor plinth, built in a rammed-earth technique of pigmented exposed concrete, reduces the perceived height from 3- to 2-storey. The use of decorative elements, such as handmade azulejo tiles and terracotta chimneys, as well as wrought metal handrails and balustrades, introduces a diversity and richness to the design that is both cohesive and authentic. Modestly ornamental, it draws inspiration from the likes of José Luis Fernández del Amo, Gio Ponti, Piero Portaluppi, Fernand Pouillon or Rudolf Olgiati, in attempting to reconcile a contemporary expressivity with the regional inflections brought by culture, landscape and climate.



Location: Loulé (Algarve), Portugal

Client: Pontos Group Oy (Finland)

Operator: Viceroy Hotels & Resorts

Interior Design: WATG

Scope of Services: Architecture and landscape architecture

Project Brief: Golf resort hotel (141 guestrooms) and 63 apartments

Gross Built Area: 19,800 sq.m

Project Status: 2009 (concept design) – 2024 (built)