

INSPIRA SANTA MARTA HOTEL
LISBON, PORTUGAL
2010–2007

A compact 4-star business hotel
set in the heart of Lisbon's historical district

The hotel is located on a street parallel to Lisbon's busy Avenida da Liberdade. The plot is a narrow perimeter block facing Santa Marta Street. The historical elements of the site consisted in the facade of an early 18th-century palace fronting the Santa Marta street, that was to be preserved, while on the backyard, the odd remnants of a dilapidated printing house were demolished. With 5-storey terracing above ground, and three levels of underground parking and technical areas, the rooms are distributed around a deep and long sky-lit atrium that begins in the lobby and ends in a theatrical stairway functioning as an informal lounge/ event space.

In a play of light and shadow, both the walls and the roof in the atrium are covered and shaded by an interweaving solid oak railing with a glazed skylight of zigzagging heights. Serving as a distribution spine, the various functions and amenities, such as reading and relaxation areas, conference and breakout rooms, are casually placed along this promenade.

Next to the bar, the restaurant has a direct street entrance as it aims to attract business customers from outside the hotel. The Spa is located on the first floor and is also expected to cater for outside clients making it intentionally inevitable to promenade across the whole length of the atrium until reaching it.

As part of an extensive research, the concept of the standard bedroom layout had two main goals: The first, to visually augment the room's perceived available space; the second, to create a relaxing bathing area flooded with natural light with the lavatory playfully placed in an intermediate zone. A multipurpose shelf binds the space between the bath and sleeping area while the graphics on the translucent bathtub glass partition wall characterises the rooms with video projections or graphic imprints. At the owner's request, the fundamentals of the Chinese *Feng Shui* are imbedded in various details of the hotel interiors; the goal being to situate the humanly built spaces in accordance with the appropriate *qi* spots.



Location: Rua de Santa Marta, Lisbon, Portugal

Client and operator: Inspira Hotels (Inspira SGPS)

Type: Urban Retreat

Scope of services: Architecture and interior design

Project Brief: 4-star boutique hotel and spa with 89 guestrooms, 206 beds

Plot size: 1,800 sq. m

Gross built area: 7,500 sq. m plus 4,000 sq. m underground parking

Construction cost: EUR 7,3m

Project status: 2007 (concept design) – 2010 (completed)

