

MELIA BAHIA HOTEL
GUARAJUBA (BAHIA), BRAZIL
2007–2004

The project comprises a 5-star hotel resort with 282 bedrooms (226 doubles and 60 suites) with a 500-seater conference centre and residence-club with 56 lock-off units. It is located 40 km North of the Salvador da Bahia international airport, along the world famous Estrada do Côco, between a coral-reef beach waterfront and a natural subtropical lagoon.

Inspired by Brazilian modernism of the 1950s, the building is formed by a central core of two main blocks (reception-lobby and conference centre), from which spring skywalks leading to the East and West bedroom wings respectively. The core building structure is based on a matrix of concrete mushroom columns, with the facades in a system of concrete blade-like vertical louvers standing next to a coloured-glass curtain wall.

Challenging the conventional U-shaped footprint of international resort hotels, these bedroom wings are positioned in a jagged configuration that simultaneously expands the diversity of ocean views and encourages people to walk between the buildings and around the gardens. In addition, there is a residence club with serviced apartments and lock-off units. These form a series of single-storey volumes with barrel-vault roofs disposed in an orthogonal matrix, creating a stunning contrast with the landscape of dunes and coconut trees. The beach-club and the spa have an Alvorada-like arched facade that further resonates the tribute to the Niemeyer aesthetics that have inspired the overall design.

Location: Guarajuba (Bahia), Brazil
Developer: Sol Melia Hotels & Resorts
Project brief: 282-bdr units (226-bdr and 60 suites) and resort with conference centre, Spa and 56-all suites lock-off residences
Gross floor area: 36,000 sq. m
Associate architects: Barbas Lopes, Cassia Cavani and AFA
Consultant: Álvaro Sans
Project: 2004 – 2007