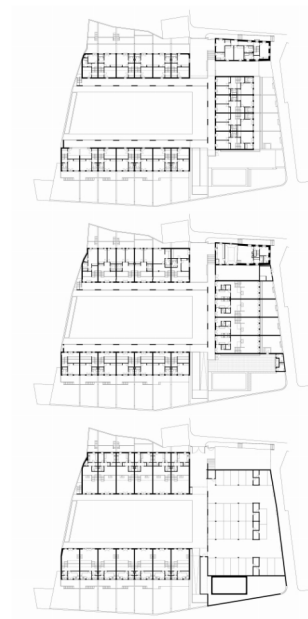


OLEIROS COURTYARD HOUSING AZEITÃO, PORTUGAL 2001–1995

Located 50 km south of Lisbon, the plot is adjacent to the village of Oleiros, near the historical town of Azeitão and regionally integrated into the Arrábida Natural Park. Even without the environmental context, the legally permitted building scope for this particular plot was clearly excessive. Given these premises, the client consciously chose to build less than allowed and in a more concentrated form, thereby avoiding adding to the fragmentation of the landscape, and the sprawl of the village. The 17 row houses are built around an inner courtyard, as close as possible to the small and picturesque nucleus of Oleiros. Seen from afar, they aim to evoke the type-form of the whitewashed communal barns and grain silos of the region. The counterpart to this exterior whitewashed architecture is the U-shaped inner courtyard, around which the houses are organised.

This spatial form generates a kind of 'cloister' intimacy that is embraced by an exposed concrete portico, visually and physically binding the whole ensemble together while making the large patio a semi-public space.

The houses are entered through a gallery in the portico. In order to avoid the excessive presence of a third floor in the small village of Oleiros, and to give spatial intensity to the interior spaces, a system of split-levels was devised based on the spatial model of Adolf Loos' *Raumplan*. In this system, bedrooms and bathrooms are located on the upper mid-floors; the dining room, kitchen and pantry occupy the first half of the mid-floor; whilst the living room is situated on the lower mid-floor, but open to the kitchen, which in turn directly connects with the walled backyard patios.





Location: Azeitão, Setúbal, Portugal

Client: Luis Franco Frazão Imobiliária, SA

Scope of services: Architecture and landscape architecture

Project brief: 17 two-storey townhouses

Plot area: 3,200 sq. m

Gross floor area: 3,200 sq. m

Construction cost: EUR 650.00 per sq. m

Project status: 1995 (concept design) – 2001 (built)

Photography: Rui Morais de Sousa