

ORIENTE COMPLEX
LISBON, PORTUGAL
2004–1996

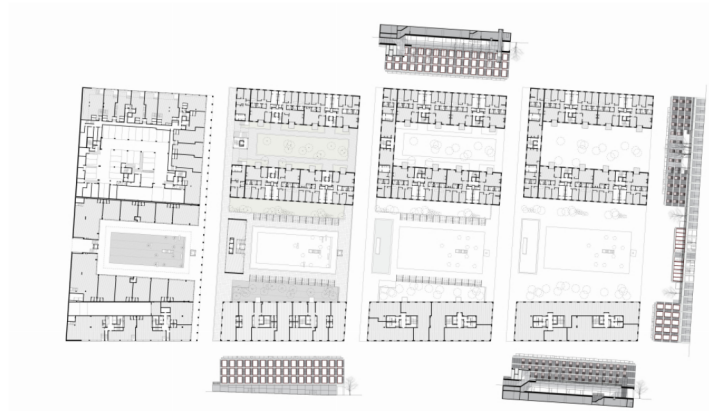
A mixed-use program
on the riverfront of Lisbon's 1998
World Exhibition precinct

A successful residential cooperative
in Lisbon's 1998 World Exhibition precinct

The Oriente Complex results from the merger of two cooperatives on a single plot with different programmes for residential, offices and retail. Set in one of the most infra-structured areas of the Lisbon Expo '98 precinct, the site faces the Boulevard of the Oceans, bordering Álvaro Siza's Portuguese Pavilion and the Pavilion of Knowledge. Formerly occupied by themed pavilions during the World Exhibition, the plot was later devised to accommodate a perimeter block development divided approximately in half between the cooperatives. Even though this separation is total —stretching from the basement parking to the surface floors— it was nevertheless possible for the parties to reach an understanding regarding public space and the compositional systems so that the overall ensemble could be perceived as a single entity.

Complying with the legal constraints imposed by the Expo '98 master plan, the buildings are set on a platform that functions as a retail ring around the perimeter, in turn shaped as a mandatory arcade on the elevations facing the boulevard. The housing block is set as a U-shaped volume on the platform level, pierced by an arched passageway that generates a semi-enclosed patio, allowing public access to the apartments through a garden. In the office-building area, this U-shaped typology is embraced at street level, generating a large public square crowned by a mezzanine at the platform level. Besides providing access to the offices, a number of restaurants and coffee shops in the square generate a constant flow of public movement. A small office building, isolated on the eastern top of the platform, functions to counterpoise both the missing slot of the arched passageway of the housing block and the public lift tower at the opposite end of the square.

The construction method for both the housing and office façades consists of an insulated brick wall, protected by a system of ventilated fibre-cement panels. The surfacing of the peripheral beams of the floor slabs interrupts the stereotomy of the panels. In contrast to the artificial nature of the concrete and fibre-cement, the frames are made of solid redwood. Despite being discreet and formally restrained, the physical presence of the ensemble aims to form a positive juxtaposition to the miscellaneous plasticity of the surroundings.



Location: Lisbon Expo '98, Portugal

Client: Cooiciclo Cooperative and Espreita-o-Rio Cooperative

Scope of services: Architecture

Landscape architecture: PROAP

Project brief: Mixed-use with street retail, offices and housing

Plot area: 6,800 sq. m

Gross floor area: 15,000 sq. m (plus 9,000 sq. m basement parking)

Construction cost: EUR 16m

Project status: 1996 (concept design) – 2004 (built)

Photography: Leonardo Finotti and Fernando Guerra