

# PROMONTORIO

## PORTIMÃO RIVERFRONT

PORTIMÃO RIVERFRONT (ALGARVE), PORTUGAL

2009–2006

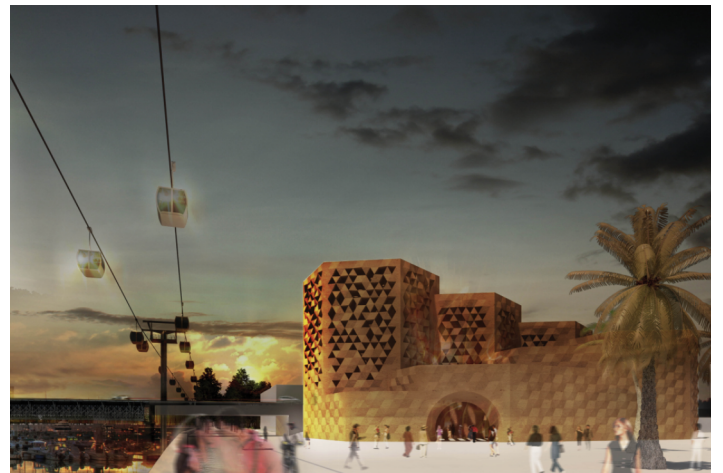
Portimão is the second city of the Algarve and is located on the coast in the western half of the region. It has a population of 45,000. Known by the Romans as *Portus Magnus*, the city became a major departure point for Portuguese explorers. Bartolomeu Dias, for instance, set off from here in 1487 to become the first European navigator to round the Southern tip of Africa. In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, fortifications were built on both sides of the Arade River to protect the town from piracy. However, most of Portimão was destroyed in the Great Earthquake of 1755.

Though the city owes most of its economic growth over recent decades to tourism, its history reaches much further back to a period of time when its fishing activity acted as the main source of income for the town. As testimony of the enduring importance of fishing, the dilapidated riverfront and harbor, with its bustling streets and urban life, is still the town's main attraction.

After promontorio won the design and build competition for the redesign of the riverfront, the municipal company ExpoArade and builders fdo created the Rio Adentro consortium.

This ambitious project features an Aquarium based on the theme of the pelagic realm, in addition to a Live Butterfly Conservatory and a Multimedia Centre. The project also comprises restaurants, shops, cafes, car parking, and the landscaping of the whole river walk. Over 8 hectares of high quality public space will be created along 2 kilometres of frontage, and the parts of the historic centre that border the riverfront

will also be restored. Upon completion, the renovated Portimão riverfront is expected to generate an estimated million visitors a year and to reduce considerably the town's seasonal dependence.



Location: Portimão riverfront (Algarve), Portugal  
Developer: Rio Adentro Consortium  
Programme: Urban renewal project, including aquarium, live butterfly conservatory, multimedia theatre, restaurants, bar and tourism centre  
Media: Turmar (Dr. Paulo Serra Lopes)  
Area: 2 kilometres long  
Estimated investment: EUR 90m  
Project: 2006