

OMBRIA VILLAS

LOULÉ, ALGARVE, PORTUGAL

2021–2017

Ombria is a property in the Algarve hinterland, between Tor and Querença villages, with a 153 hectares' master plan under development and phased construction. Besides an 18-hole golf course, Ombria Resort includes a 5-star hotel, spa and conference centre, in addition to villas and other residential. With extensive citrus groves, fig and carob trees, small farms and villages, the dramatic landscape and rich bio-diversity of this estate includes a sizable watercourse and a series of archaeological remnants related to waterworks and farming.

The allocated site for the villas within the Ombria Resort master plan holds a number of challenging design constraints which, in cumulative layers of complexity, include a very steep terrain (up to 56%) with North orientation, vehicle and pedestrian accessibility to each plot and an array of legal mandatory limitations in terms of footprint, building heights, setbacks, plot configuration, etc. In addition, the beauty of the Algarve hinterland landscape suggests the need for small broken-down volumes so as to reduce their visual impact.

With this in mind, each villa is the result of specific design that negotiates the terrain with the different layout requirements. Despite the common ground governing the design principles, each house is unique, as each plot presents a specific set of challenges. This said, all villas are conceived as free-standing clusters of small volumes, sharing the principle of 'hamlets within a village' and ensuring terrain adaptability, utmost privacy and optimized sun exposure.

Functionally, these two-storey villas have clearly defined night-time and daytime areas, with common areas in the upper floor and bedrooms on the lower level. Each house gravitates around a clustered patio secluded and sheltered from wind guaranteeing that the outdoor areas are both sunny and shaded, so as to ensure an all year round use. On the living room, a large veranda is devised as a picture frame of the landscape. The architectural language seeks a contemporary yet regionalist approach, inspired on vernacular motifs, patterns and textures, on locally sourced materials and on a simple and robust detailing with patina and low maintenance in mind.

Location: Ombria Resort, (Loulé, Algarve), Portugal

Developer: Pontos Group OY (Finland)

Project Brief: Villas from 3-bdr (260 sq. m) to 6-bdr (499 sq. m)

Gross Construction Area: 4,150 sq. m in a total of 12 villas

Project Status: 2021 (approved project)