

SUNSHINE ALCHEMY

CASA FORTUNATO

Alcácer do Sal, Portugal

Images by Manolo Yllera

Cleverly hidden behind the hushed doors of discretion, an unassuming, white-washed façade, typical of the Alentejo region, is home to style sweet spot, Casa Fortunato – a private-hire house. Stepping through its old glossy blue entrance reveals its chameleon temperament – a creative hub of design, architecture, colour and aesthetic beauty.

Casa Fortunato is pleasantly no ordinary casa, but a rare sanctuary of curated style and art housed within a restored 100-year-old townhouse villa. Located in the heartlands of Portugal's cork and pine nut plantations of the Alentejo region, Casa Fortunato is in the historic port town of Alcácer do Sal, a 45-minute drive south of the capital Lisbon and a 30-minute drive from Comporta and the wild beaches of the Tróia Peninsula.

As architects, designers and thinkers with an enthusiastic passion for finding unloved heritage buildings, owners Filipa and António are famed for their anthropologic approach to restoration projects that come with their rhapsody of interior beguilement. Style, design, artworks, heirloom antiques, touchy textiles, a playground for oddities found in the markets and iconic furnishings stage a post-modernist glamour to retro finds.

Inside, the bygone romance of an old house has been preserved and restored; the old bones of the villa, including decorative panelling, glazed *azulejos* tiles, ornate timber beams and the beautifully worn tiled floors, continue their dialogue with the past where salvaged highlights remind the guest of the town's once importance and wealth.

The interior narratives are playful, set to a canvas of lime-washed whites and the period tones of Farrow & Ball paint favourite Mizzle – a soft milky green pigment which skirts around the rooms, framing the scene of scarlet reds, pistachio, florals, velvets, tufted rugs and conversation-worthy artworks, some by Filipa's grandmother.

Filipa and António are ardent collectors, and it is no accident that their treasures needed a new home. The six suites, lounges and dining rooms are populated by furnishings which dance through the house like a bright harlequin. Delights from a vintage Mario Bellini Sofa for B&B Italia in burnt orange, sunshine yellow Nimrod Chairs by Marc Newson and a seductive lounge in cornflower blues by Patricia Urquiola are at home in this sleepy port town. Collecting post-modernist furnishings is not the only passion of António, his other eye sources the icons of lighting – a crucial element in his dialogue of curated design. Vintage Flos lamps sit nicely under a pendant light by Noguchi, and the colourful hanging Foscarini lanterns by Andrea Anastasio add an accent of the exotic.

Colourful sunshine tonals illuminate the courtyard garden, pool and chillax zones cast against a glorious geometric rainbow of salvaged handmade tiles sourced from an old-timer maker – a fun-spirited design touch that captures the 'not too serious' heart of Casa Fortunato.











