



Angra do Heroísmo City Park Development

Angra do Heroísmo, Terceira Island, Azores, Portugal



The classification as a World Heritage Site reflects the historical, cultural and natural importance of the city of Angra do Heroísmo. Of enormous beauty and singularity, Angra city has seen the urban buildings rehabilitation growing in the historical center, as well as tourism, therefore, is important to expand the green areas in order to improve quality of life of its inhabitants. Hereupon, the existing City Park was increased by about 14.000 m², adding value and landscape framing two important rehabilitated buildings in the city.



Start Up Building | Casa do Capitão Donatário

It is a remarkable historical building (Img.5), the first building of the fifteenth century, where the captain João Vaz Corte Real lived during the discoveries period. It is currently the Start Up of Angra (Img.6), created by the City Hall to stimulate projects from young entrepreneurs.

Interpretive Center | Casa do Capitão Donatário

The beautiful manor house that existed entered in a state of decay after the earthquake in 1980. Here is born the Interpretive Center (Img.7), which aims to provide knowledge about the city's history, heritage, historical achievements and personalities that influenced its history. The project was designed by the Architect Álvaro Siza Vieira (Img.8).

City Park | Jardim Duque da Terceira

This garden, with almost 20 000 m² is one of the most beautiful and classic of the Azores. Since the beginning of its construction in 1882, several aesthetic conceptions have been implemented in this garden. Originally, it was the Belgian agronomist Francisco José Gabriel who designed the lower garden area (Img.3), and did it according to French garden style implemented by Le Nôtre in the 16th century, with symmetrical grass rugs and flower beds, topiary pruning, rose bushes, geometrically arranged water elements and stone walks with iconic reproductions. The climatic conditions of the Azores allowed the easy adaptation of exotic species brought from several parts of the world, as well as endemic vegetation.

In the garden above (Img.4) there are remnants of the wood forest that existed there, in which an English style mosaic prevailed, which maintains the romanticism of a wilder nature. In the highest zone of the garden stands the Monument of Memória (Img.1), an obelisk erected in the 19th century in honor to the passage of Pedro IV by the island, and integrated the garden after the connection established on the slope, where can be found the old tank (Img.2) that provided water for the old farm that took the place of the current garden.



City Park Enlargement

The project design establishes continuity with the existing garden space and is also important for the valorization and landscape framing of the Start Up Building and the Interpretive Center. With the development in real estate and tourism, the need to increase green areas per inhabitant is paramount.

The proposed design does not modify the existing morphology. The supporting walls of the terraces were recovered (Img.9), as well as two water wells, among which a water path was traced over the water, integrating the water element into space. The existing trees were maintained, retreating only the invader ones which contributes to the natural preservation and protection of the landscape. The path network is designed according to the topography. The proposed vegetation is adapted to climatic characteristics of the surrounding place, including exotic and endemic species, adding a touch of colour, texture and volumes to the space (Img.9). There are specific spaces with flower for pollinators, contributing to biodiversity or a collection of rose bushes and a place for tea and coffee plants. The materials used are modern, which, due to their simplicity, are combined in an harmonious way with the materials of the ancient garden.

In an urban environment, the role of green areas is fundamental, due to their functions for microclimate control, thermoregulation, humidity control, oxygen production, wind and erosion protection. It is also important for its cultural and educational functions.

It is important to preserve the identity of the city and build in a city with a historic center is a big challenge. Angra has enlarged the public park in about 14 000 m² to create a larger green heart for the city, where people can have a more intense experience closer to nature.



Design: Catarina Grilo (Associação Montanheiros)

