

RM House

Location: Madeira Island, Funchal, Portugal

If I could be as lofty and proud, as open, and discreet as the RM house, I would feel like I was ruling the world! Such is this simple yet mighty house. A sturdy, crystalline house, simple and open plan, where all space dominates and allows itself to be dominated. A house that is easy to grasp and retain. A house that lives on and extends itself into the distant landscape like a belvedere, from where everything can be seen and reached. In the background the sea and the immensity of the sky. A sea that is the entrance and the departure of large transatlantic ships and enormous floating constructions, which access the port of Funchal every day. Such is this confined and almost limitless house.

The RM house is located on a small lot, surrounded by high walls and by the *levada* that faces the plot, and which imposes the maximum height of the façade, thus conditioning its development. These strictures have led to its unique character.

Thus, those accessing the plot catch a glimpse of a white body with curved lines, which unifies elevation and roof, and where the large lenses that look at the sea and reflect the sky stand out. The spatial diversity in such a small plot was here explored to the extreme. The entrance to the car park shapes a patio and allows the view of the house from below. The entrance to the house is made through the small door that leads through the buried and covered path, illuminated by the glass skylight, to the access door to the house itself. It is an exterior/ interior route that enriches the senses. Whoever enters the house is faced with the staircase, at half floor. The landing forms the high-ceilinged hall. And so, we find ourselves in a sculptural, white, luminous staircase where steps, artificial lighting and design are harmoniously combined. The staircase is the centre of the whole house, which connects everything and lets everything be seen and sensed with its transparency. The lift contributes to the easy connection between all floors. The living room and kitchen are connected and separated by sliding panels; the office is formed by a curtain that allows greater flexibility of space. In turn, the living room and kitchen enjoy unique views over Funchal and take advantage of the white pool terrace, by converting it into an outdoor living room. A drop-shaped pool, which follows the curved development of the wall of the plot and the main elevation of the house. A pool that ties in with the dynamics of the house and complements it. At its bottom, a window establishes the contact of who dives to the basement room. And so, the exterior of the pool and the basement space dialogue in a peculiar way. The upper floor houses the suite totally facing the sea and the subsequent bedrooms, more contained, but equally treated with care and seriousness. In this way, the rear façade is distinguished by its relationship with the high stone wall, which reflects it, and which, at the top, leads to the *levada*.

The *levada* that, every day, passes countless curious tourists, and from where they can see a simple, clear, open, and transparent house, for those who live in it; but completely contained and discreet, for those who, from above, try in vain to invade its privacy.

The RM house thus takes possession of all its exterior space, extends all of its compartments into it, knows how to discretely understand its different relationships and, for this reason, seduces. The variation in luminosity during the day transforms the house, and at night, light springs from it, like a lighthouse looking out to sea, which imposes its presence from above. But even so, it remains the small white house that contemplates the landscape and takes in the sky and the sea.





















