

## Terras da Comporta: preserving to add value

**Contemporary architectural designs, perfectly set in the landscape and which respect the environment, built with natural, sustainable materials such as wood and cork, and using advanced technology in order to attain excellent levels of efficiency and comfort.**

**A** couple of years ago, one of the world's leading architectural publications, *ArchDaily*, published an article on innovation with the following title: Is Cross-Laminated Timber (CLT) the Concrete of the Future?

Everything points to this indeed being the case, especially since the issue of sustainability has become a cross-cutting one across all areas of society and the economy, particularly in construction, which by the last decades of the 20th century was dominated by concrete and steel, whose massive ecological footprint now looks to be no longer sustainable for the planet. Vanguard Properties, which is always on the lookout for the development of technologies that reduce the environmental impact of new projects, especially if these are located in an area of great beauty and scenic richness such as Comporta, decided that all projects planned for what is the largest real estate project in the region, Terras da Comporta, would be implemented using wood as the main material and always based on two construction systems: the previously mentioned CLT



(Cross-Laminated Timber) and Wood Frame.

What these two systems have in common is the advantage of using a prime, natural material – a renewable and recyclable resource that promotes reforestation, retains carbon dioxide and does not require the burning of fossil fuels in its production. As a matter of fact, the development of new technologies in the engineering and architectural fields has made it possible for construction using timber structures, which was once widely used (even today one can find the famous, centuries-old Pombaline ‘cages’ in several buildings in downtown Lisbon) to be today not only a highly sustainable solution, but also very competitive when compared to those made of steel, concrete, or even masonry. And their advantages are numerous: greater resistance to fire and earthquakes, greater ease of transportation and assembly, a better weight-to-strength

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ratio, and significant cost savings. In addition, construction with timber is done off-site, i.e. in a controlled factory environment, so involving highly qualified jobs and a reduction in atmospheric, visual, and environmental pollution. At the same time, the fact that a wooden building weighs between 80% and 85% less than a concrete one reduces the size of the support structures and thus also the need

for foundations (also made of concrete) that would be very intrusive in the protected landscape of Comporta.

“Wood is a material with exceptional construction characteristics: it has a capacity to resist compression, tension and bending like no other, and also has very low thermal conductivity,” explains Nuno Vale,

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CEO of Ooty, a company specialising in this field that was chosen by Vanguard to undertake the construction of the various projects for Terras da Comporta, including the Torre, set in the vast pine forest that surrounds the traditional Alentejo village of the same name on the edge of rice fields, and the Dunas, located on the land overlooking the beach at Praia do Pego. Indeed, it was based on its full confidence in a definitive change of the construction paradigm that Vanguard recently made an investment that saw it take a stake in Black Oak Company, the business specialising in sustainable building systems founded by Nuno Vale and which owns Ooty and the recently created brand Kōzōwood, which is aimed at a more upmarket segment.

*“Anyone who buys a property usually wonders whether or not they are making a good purchase or a good investment, but in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a good purchase involves acquiring something that, in terms of sustainability, is already at a higher level,”* says Vanguard Properties CEO José Cardoso Botelho with conviction. *“In the real estate sector we believe that highly energy-efficient houses with a negative environmental footprint are always guaranteed to appreciate in value and, in this context, wood is clearly the future.”*

### CLT vs Wood Frame

Although CLT construction was first used in Austria during the 40s, it is today widely used all over the world, thanks not only to its excellent characteristics in terms of resistance, appearance and versatility, but also because it makes it possible to build to height. CLT panels are composed of solid wood lamellas, glued and pressed in layers, with each lamella oriented perpendicular to the previous one, generating greater structural rigidity in both directions and, consequently, greater re-



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sistance to traction and compression. These panels can function as walls, floors, ceilings and roofs, and their thickness and lengths can be adapted to the architectural requirements of each project.

*“CLT is a product that enhances the construction of sustainable and ecological buildings in height and large structures, and is thus more suited to large buildings, making it possible to construct buildings of thirty to forty floors,”* says Nuno Vale. *“In fact, veritable skyscrapers almost twice that height are already being planned all over the world.”*

Wood Frame, meanwhile, is the world’s most widely used system for housing construction, and is widely implemented in markets as different as the Nordic countries, Canada, the US, South Africa, large parts of Asia – including Japan and several regions of China – Australia and New Zealand. As Vale explains, this system uses frames composed of structural uprights in wood, stabilised by a bracing panel and filled with various types of thermal insulation such as expanded cork agglomerate.

*“Wood Frame is thus a product more suitable for sustainable and ecological structures*

*of smaller dimensions, but where you want to achieve high energy efficiency with a low coefficient of thermal transmission,”* he says, explaining that at the company now under Vanguard’s wing they already work with both systems in assembling houses, often in complementary fashion to make the most of the advantages of each. Whatever the system used, he stresses, Ooty and Kōzōwood always use timber that is internationally certified and duly catalogued for its resistance capacity for construction, from well-managed forests that are also certified with the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) stamp, in order to guarantee that no wood from uncontrolled deforestation is being used. This is the case with Nordic and American pines, for example. Meanwhile, the company is already preparing a national certification process for Portuguese wood for construction, through a partnership with the University of Minho.

Nuno Vale has no hesitation in affirming that Vanguard has *“a surprisingly refreshing vision in the construction sector”* in that not only does it care about what it does, but it understands the clear advantages of these systems in terms both of speed of construction and of superior quality in energy efficiency. *“In all the real estate projects for Terras da Comporta there is always a very strong ecological component, a sustainable aspect never seen here before, with precautions that guarantee the region’s green image and with the advantage of guaranteeing the much-needed preservation of these territories, because many are abandoned,”* he notes, concluding: *“In the twenty-first century, it is the clients themselves who have new demands and concerns relating to the environment and its preservation. Vanguard has no intention of replicating the mistakes made in other parts of Portugal in decades past, and these new buildings will be structures whose architecture will have no major impact on the surroundings, and which respect all requirements.”*





# And there was light...

**Producing for renewal: Europe's largest energy community is to be born in the Terras da Comporta with the installation of an array of photovoltaic panels that will enable each consumer to also generate electricity.**

**T**oday, technology allows us to be not only energy consumers but also producers; for that to happen you just need to put a photovoltaic system on your roof. This is what is going ahead in the Terras da Comporta real estate project, with an investment in renewable energy as a central pillar of the future that aims to be 100 percent sustainable.

*"Each house, each hotel, each commercial space will have discreet photovoltaic panels installed that will produce energy for residents' own consumption, or to share with the community whenever there is no need for consumption or in case of excess production,"* explains Manuel Collares Pereira, who is acting as scientific advisor to Vanguard Properties and is one of Portugal's leading experts on issues of energy and sustainability. A former professor at Lisbon's Instituto Superior Técnico (IST) and coordinator of the Renewable Energies Chair at the University of Évora, and founder and former president of the Energy Conservation Center (now ADENE - Agency for Energy) and of the Portuguese Solar Engineering Society (SPES), he notes that the project *"will have about a thousand residences and several buildings that can be both consumers and producers; by associating them we constitute what is called an energy community."*

In both the developments that are part of Terras da Comporta, Torre and Dunas, all private or commercial buildings are to be equipped with photovoltaic panels and connected to the network, so creating Europe's largest energy community. When the switch is turned on, the owners of any of the villas built here will thus be a member of this community and consume renewable energy produced by themselves and their neighbours. By using locally generated resources, the entire community benefits from energy that comes from a renewable source that is totally clean and fundamental to the energy efficiency of the development,



so contributing very significantly to the sustainable development of both the region and the country. And, of course, also saving on their monthly bills.

*"The reduction in the cost of energy can be up to forty percent compared to [power from] the normal grid,"* says Collares Pereira. *"An energy community is, on the one hand, a concept for shared production and consumption and, on the other hand, a legal entity with a company behind it that offers the service."* In this case, it is Vanguard Properties and Energia Unida, part of the Greenvolt group, that have joined together to develop the Terras da Comporta community.

This partnership is fully aligned with the values and positioning of the project, whose aims are regional development, innovation and sustainability. *"We hope that this initiative we're going to implement in the Dunas and Torre developments grows and expands, that it can create a movement, that it extends to those around us and inspires them to follow this example so that they contribute to the increase of renewable energy production in Portugal,"* the Vanguard advisor adds.

The economy of scale resulting from the deployment of this array of photovoltaic panels will offer enterprises an energy autonomy of at least 80%, with power self-produced or from renewable sources. The forecast for maximum installed capacity is 7 megawatts - enough to supply energy to about 2,000 households.

*"The Terras da Comporta project will be innovative in many areas,"* says Collares Pereira. *"Our definition of sustainability is*

*not just about energy or biodiversity. It's a more comprehensive and complete vision."* He explains that the sustainable development strategy that Vanguard Properties has defined for Terras da Comporta is based both on the innovative concept of Net-Zero Energy Building (NZEB) and on the use of wood as a building material and always according to two systems, CLT (Cross Laminated Timber) and Wood Frame (see cover article). *"The photovoltaic system will supply the building with the amount of energy it needs, and once everything is taken into*

*account, it will be net zero,"* he explains, pointing out that in 15 to 20 years, European Union legislation will make NZEB compulsory: *"It's the future... and the future is already tomorrow."*

The Dunas and Torres developments are located in the middle of a pine forest and will remain a part of this same forest, of which they respectively occupy a scant 6% and 8% of its area. *"One of the things we want to do and will do is manage our forest in order to preserve it and guarantee its biodiversity,"* Collares Pereira promises. *"By doing this we will be guaranteeing the total sustainability of this investment."*



**"We want to be the good example that others will follow."**

Manuel Collares Pereira,  
scientific advisor to Vanguard Properties

The water supply, meanwhile, is to come from boreholes, just as it does today in the village of Comporta and in Carvalhal. There are tight restrictions in the local municipal plan on the amount of garden that can be watered, with drip irrigation being preferred to sprinklers. The two golf courses, Dunas and Torre, will also have their own water supply. Water treated in plants to be built by Vanguard in the two resorts will be used as a source for irrigation. Pedestrian and bicycle paths will be laid out to contribute to a reduction in car use, and infrastructure installed to promote the use of electric cars. A shuttle service to the beach is also planned. In addition to these measures to safeguard the environment, Vanguard wants to foster a range of economic activity around the project, to provide food based on local production.

Terras da Comporta will be innovative in all senses - a pioneer that Collares Pereira dreams will lead the way for many. *"We want to be the good example that others will follow."*



# Between the dunes and the sea

**It is a pure links, in the style of the oldest and most traditional Scottish golf courses, and its designer, David McLay Kidd, is also Scottish and one of today's most renowned golf architects, responsible among many others for the iconic Bandon Dunes complex in Oregon, in the US.**

**"G**olf began to be played along the rugged coastline of my country, over the dunes and sandy terrain bordering the beaches, where the sea breeze is always a constant," explains David McLay Kidd. "This is what we call links golf."

Born and raised in Scotland among golf courses and golfers, from an early age he followed his father, Jimmy Kidd, a golf course superintendent, in his passion for the game but, above all, in his constant concern with managing courses in an ecological and sustaina-

ble way – a principle that he continues to follow scrupulously, by designing courses that not only respect the balance of the ecosystem of their location, but also highlight the natural beauty of the surrounding environment.

Scheduled to open in 2023, with a soft opening in April of the same year, the 18 holes of Dunas Golf are spread over some 38 hectares characterised by the region's beautiful natural landscape: rolling dunes, large green patches of pine forest and endless greensward.

*"This course is a par-71 championship course," says Rodrigo Ulrich, Vanguard Properties' newly appointed Golf Director. "It is challenging and worthy of entering the top competition circuits, but it lets you recover when you miss. It's designed to provide a good game for pros, and by virtue of having several tee offs, even juniors can have fun playing."*



According to Ulrich, Dunas Golf will also feature an academy that can be frequented by professionals (such as Portugal's famous Pedro "Figgy" Figueiredo, a Vanguard ambassador and European Tour competitor) as well as beginners, and which has use of an area of some three hectares.

David McLay Kidd, who is scheduled to visit in October and whose presence at the opening is also confirmed, defines Dunas Golf in a few words: *"You only have to look at the list of the best courses in the world, from St Andrews to Pebble Beach, to realize that the dunes, the influence of the sea breeze and the beauty of the coast are the elements that man cannot create; they have to exist naturally. Dunas is true links golf, unique in Portugal, unique in all of Southern Europe. For golfers who know links, this will be a 'must-play' course! And for those who don't, it will be a new experience, an awakening to what golf should really be and offer."*



## David McLay Kidd

**After designing so many famous and beautiful golf courses around the world, Dunas in Terras da Comporta will be your first project in continental Europe. What makes it so original and distinctive?**

Golf is best played through beautiful landscapes and Dunas is surely that. I have done my best work on sand next to Oceans, Dunas sits hard against the Atlantic spilling over giant dunes of sugar sand. The sand dunes are on a giant scale, soft rolling shapes ten, fifteen, twenty meters high, the golf course winds through these massive dunes, sometimes sheltered from the wind, at other times fully exposed to it.

The most original and distinct feature of this course is the fescue grass we used on the golf course. This is the same grass that grows at St Andrews known as The Home of Golf. Fescue grows best in sand in temperate coastal climates,



fescue loves the Comporta Coast. This grass allows players to not only play the ball through the air but also along the ground, just like they do in Scotland.

**What was your major challenge while designing the Dunas course?**

The major challenge wasn't actually designing a layout that respects the environment of the region, but rather to develop and recover a project that I first visited in 2008. So it has been a long process and also a great challenge – but the wait was worth it!

**And your biggest surprise?**

As the golf course sat almost complete for six years before Vanguard purchased it, the native vegetation grew back and the golf course now looks mature even before it opens, rarely does that happen.



# At home, around the chimney

In the shape of a cylinder, rectangle, or square, the chimney is the symbol of Alentejo culture, but also the centre and soul of a house. It is around the hearth that the family gathers in the evenings, in the long winter or summer nights, to talk, eat or simply relax.



These spacious and bright homes are a modern and creative reinterpretation of traditional Alentejo houses in which the big fireplace and its chimney occupy a central place and around which the living area, dining area and kitchen are arrayed. Designed by the prestigious architecture firm Saraiva & Associados, the Casas da Chaminé (Chimney Houses) are located in Muda Reserve, a residential project developed by Vanguard Properties among pine trees and almost as an extension of the quiet village of Muda, population just 40, located between Comporta and Grândola.

Based on an innovative concept – recreating the simple, quiet and communitarian life of the rural villages of the region – Muda Reserve extends over

350 hectares, in a prime location between the countryside and more than 60 kilometers of near-deserted beaches, offering different types of housing in a perfect symbiosis between urban order and the rural margins: houses, villas and small farms, designed according to the needs and preferences of their owners.

Casas da Chaminé are part of the Casas da Aldeia development phase, built on two floors, with areas of between 180 m<sup>2</sup> and 300 m<sup>2</sup>, and available in typologies ranging from three bedrooms to five bedrooms, all with a swimming pool and garden, and plenty of privacy thanks to the generous size of the plots (from 830m<sup>2</sup> to 1,900 m<sup>2</sup>) and un-

obstructed views of the pine forest, in perfect harmony with the surrounding landscape. The interior space is surprising, inviting you to discover curious architectural details and promising evening gatherings of family and friends around the large fireplace that dominates the living and dining area, and with an impressive high ceiling crossed by wooden beams. The kitchens, meanwhile, are either open in an

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informal layout or entirely separate. The master suite, on the second floor, has a terrace and outdoor shower. In the first phase, 30 units will be built and are already selling fast, although they are still on the drawing board. And because sustainability is the principle that guides all Vanguard Properties projects, these first 30 Casas da Chaminé will also be the first houses at Muda Reserve built with wooden structures according to the Wood Frame system and that include photovoltaic panels in order to be self-sufficient in terms of energy, and which will be Net Zero Energy Buildings (NZEBs), with near energy neutrality.

*“They will be totally sustainable and high quality villas, with contemporary design and innovative technology, but preserving the spirit of the traditional houses of the Alentejo of yesteryear,”* explains José Cardoso Botelho, CEO of Vanguard Properties.





# Terras da Comporta: unpublished images

**P**edro Narra, 47, was born and raised in Setúbal, but his roots are in the Alentejo region. It was in Amareleja, at the house of his grandparents where he always spent his vacations, that he made the key discoveries that have marked him for life: fishing with a line and hook, harvesting grapes in the summer, picking olives in the winter, and trapping birds at any time of year. At 17 he became a lifeguard in the Sol Troia tourist area, across the Sado from Setúbal, and discovered the river's dolphins – a relationship that he was later to deepen in Kaikoura, New Zealand, where he did an internship while studying Hotel Management at the Porto Tourism and Hotel School.

His experience in that haven for wildlife was to be the starting point on an extraordinary journey through Australia and the Pacific, a journey that set him on a course for life. He returned to Portugal and in 1998 founded a dolphin-watching company, Vertigem Azul. Photography then became a constant pastime. He has taken pictures for the Costa Azul regional tourist authority and the Portuguese edition of *National Geographic* magazine, and published photo books: *Golfinhos do Sado* (Dolphins of the Sado, 2009), *Estuário* (Estuary, 2017), *Selvagens* (Savage Islands, 2020) and *Costa Alentejana* (Alentejo Coast, 2021). His work on the conservation of green turtles in the Bijagós archipelago, in Guinea-Bissau, made the final of an international competition organized by French wildlife magazine *Terre Sauvage*.

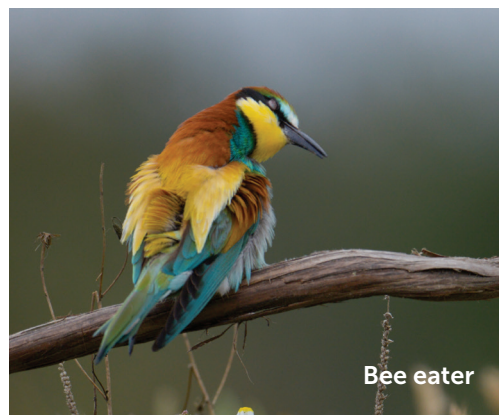
A restless nonconformist, Narra is always looking for new projects. *Terras da Comporta* (Lands of Comporta) is his latest challenge.

#### How did you come up with the idea of publishing this book and how will it be distributed?

*Terras da Comporta* is a special edition for Vanguard Properties: it will not be on sale in bookstores. The project was presented along with all my books, and we came to the conclusion that Vanguard would like a compilation with elements from various themes, bringing together in a single book the fauna, flora and all the diversity of Comporta's landscapes.

#### How do you characterize the relationship of Vanguard Properties, a real estate developer, with Comporta, a region of such great biodiversity?

These new projects – not only Vanguard's, but all the projects that are underway in Comporta – should take the utmost care in terms of respect for



Bee eater



Bottlenose dolphin of the Sado River



White stork

nature. For me, that is mandatory. Humans and wildlife can live together and respect each other.

#### What does the book *Terras da Comporta* reveal to us?

It reveals something of the many things that people can find in the region: beautiful and spectacular flora that is at times seasonal; the same thing with birds – in one season you can see anything from 250 to 300 species; also some mammals; and the unique landscapes of this wonderful coastline – more than 60 kilometers of uninterrupted beaches from Troia to Sines that are not only beautiful but all but deserted. For those who don't know the region, it can be a nice surprise.

#### Are there dolphins in your book?

Yes. The Sado dolphins also pass the beaches of Comporta, in front of the Vanguard project, and I depict bottlenose dolphins as well as petrels and other birdlife. The Sado estuary is one of the last refuges for wildlife in Portugal. We have a huge diversity of dunes, beaches, estuary, marshland, cork oak forest, salt pans, rice paddies, pine forests and more.

#### Given this wealth of biodiversity, how did you structure the book?

I conceived the book based on the way I see Comporta, coming from Troia. I lived in Troia for 12 years and know the area like the back of my hand. Over

there are the dunes, and then from that tongue of sand down there, I see on one side the estuary and the river, and on the other the sea and the Atlantic coast. The book opens with a picture of the rice fields that forms one of Comporta's most emblematic landscapes, then animals start to appear, in the estuary and in the marshes; it continues with the dunes and the plants and animals that live there. Further on we have more rice fields, with that vibrant green that is redolent of Asia. The structure of the book is by themes – Earth, Blue, Wings, Sand and Light – and it ends with coastal landscapes and deserted white sandy beaches.

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Pedro Narra



**What surprised you the most?**

Every day surprises me. I can spend a day or a month with an animal, plant or insect and it is always different. What I really enjoy about this profession is that all my creativity is concentrated in the photography: I can be myself, switch off from my day-to-day problems, and totally focus my concerns and my mind on what I am photographing. And I have the freedom to choose subjects that I enjoy working on. What I experience in photography are unique moments that I can only share later, and only as a very small part of that experience.

**How many weeks or months did you spend in the field and what was your way of working?**

When you're working with nature, you can take a picture in a few minutes because you catch a fantastic light, or it can take five, six or seven years. For a project like this it was easier, because I already had some images.

**What was the most difficult and time-consuming aspect of photography?**

The mammals are always difficult, because most have nocturnal habits, but some birds are a challenge, too. The discovery part, the start of the process, is always the trickiest: picking up their habits, finding out where they'll land, where they'll sleep, then you start to understand their behaviors, and sometimes it even becomes a routine.

**How can we experience and enjoy this area and all its biodiversity without spoiling it?**

By showing the greatest respect possible – respecting both nature and ourselves, humans. Dumping plastic into the water or leaving a bag of garbage on the beach is bad, and the harm we do to the environment will come back to bite us. It's as simple as that.

**Is there anything left for you to photograph?**

There always is. I could photograph only the Comporta region for the rest of my life and it would never end. There is always a leaf, another insect, a butterfly, the sunset – there is always something. There's no shortage of reasons.



# Green gold

**The vast green swathe of rice fields that stretches between Grândola and Alcácer do Sal is also one of Comporta's trademarks: here, Carolino rice rules and looms large in the region's gastronomy.**

**T**his strain is very Portuguese, of exceptional quality, and allows the imagination to run wild, and can be cooked in 1,001 ways, with meat, fish or vegetables, as no other food has as much capacity to absorb the flavors of other ingredients as rice. Whether tomato, octopus, shellfish, razor clams, sprouts, coriander, *serrabulho* (a blood stew) or in *arroz-doce* (rice pudding with milk, sugar and cinnamon), Carolino rice is perfect for cooking that creamy and intensely flavorful rice that nobody can resist.

This indigenous variety is characterized by its short, fat white grains, which absorb all the liquid used when cooked. As the grains are plumper because they have more starch, the end result is surprising: voluminous (after cooking, even with just water, it acquires three times its original volume) and always velvety smooth, whatever its companion.

While the cultivation of rice, which originated in Asia, only reached Europe in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, it is to the Islamic peoples from North Africa that we owe not only its introduction into the Iberian Peninsula, at some time in the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> centuries, but also its name, deriving from the Arabic word *roz* (*ar-roz*).

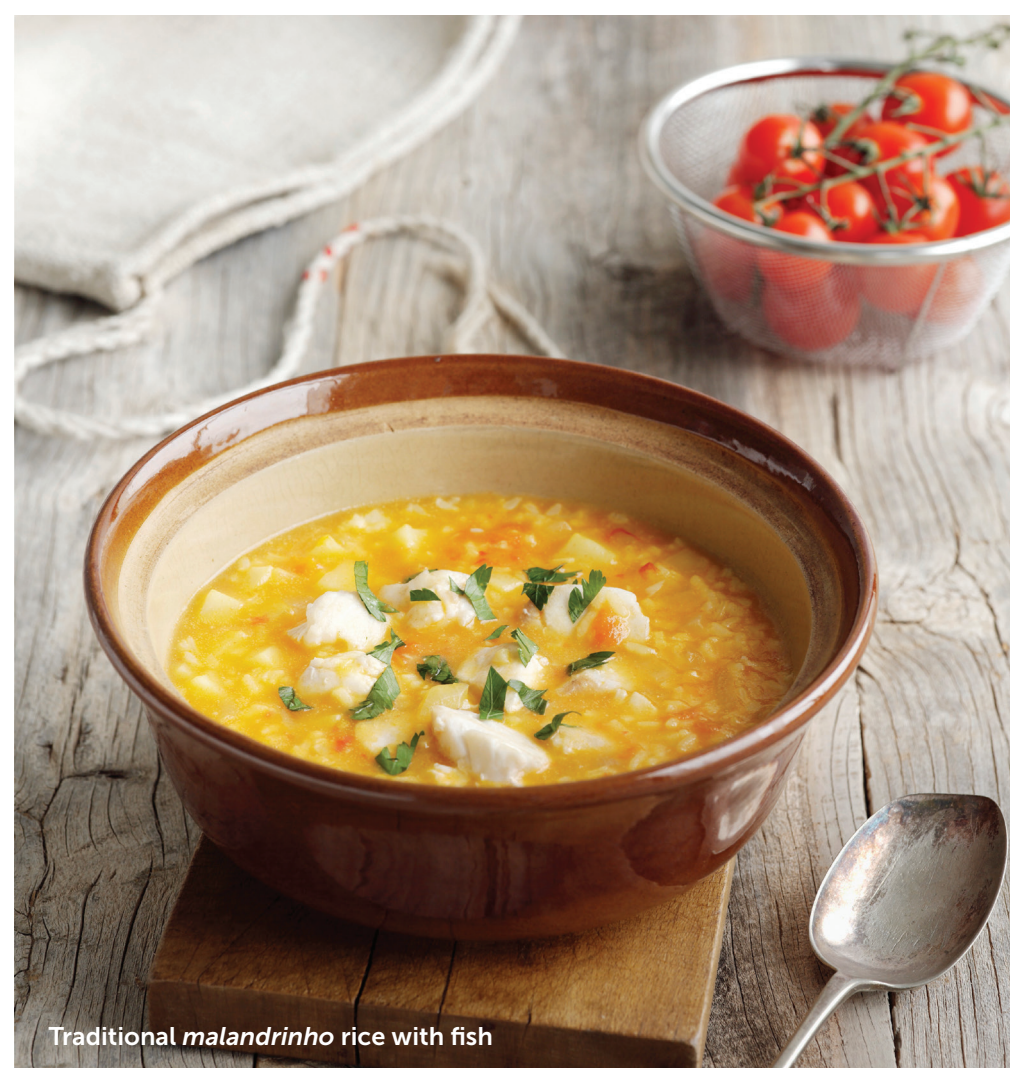
In Portugal, it was during the reign of king Dom Diniz (1279-1325) that the first references appeared to its cultivation, at the time then only for the wealthy classes. Once Portu-

gal's period of maritime exploration got underway, rice was carried by Portuguese sailors across seas never before sailed, to Africa and South America – above all to Brazil, where *arroz com feijão* (rice and beans) became a staple dish and a means of survival for the vast majority of the population.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a later king, Dom José decided to invest in production,

ordering the planting of the marshy lands in the floodplains of the Tejo, Sado and Mondego rivers, but it was only at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that rice farming was undertaken on a large scale, and only after proper rules had been drawn up for land preparation and water management, including irrigation and drainage. Thus, with the establishment of modern rice farming, different varieties of rice began to be grown and the name Carolino came to refer to the oblong grains of a variety of the Japonica subspecies of *Oryza sativa L.* that differs from the most common rice grown on dry land (*Oryza sativa communis*) and is similar to the rice grown in the Carolinas in the US.

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Traditional *malandrino* rice with fish



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There is evidence of rice being grown on the land currently belonging to Herdade da Comporta, one of Portugal's largest agricultural properties, as far back as the middle of the 19th century, but in 1836 it was incorporated into the Companhia das Lezírias do Tejo e Sado, a company under the Portuguese Crown. In 1925, it was acquired by the Atlantic Company, Lda., a British-owned company that invested significantly in rice cultivation, fertilizing the land and building agricultural facilities. Thirty years later, in 1955, the Herdade da Comporta was bought by Manuel Ricardo Espírito Santo, the then Chairman of the Board of Banco Espírito Santo, who decided to accelerate its development, increasing the area of productive land – both rice paddies and pine forests – also investing in wine and other horticultural products and beginning the regeneration of the area's various villages.



Rice pudding with cinnamon

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in 2019, of the 12,500 hectares that make up the Herdade, 1,376 are sold to Vanguard Properties, which then begins the development of the region's largest real estate project, Terras da Comporta.

Blissfully indifferent to all the political and economic vicissitudes of recent decades, the cultivation of rice in the region has not only flourished, but brought growing fame and profit to local cuisine, as an essential ingredient in all of the many restaurants in Comporta and surrounding areas, which source the freshest of produce from the sea and land to make real delicacies such as the famous cuttlefish rice cooked in its own ink. If you haven't yet tried it, you don't know what you're missing!

# Educating for sustainability



**It explains scientific topics in clear and accessible language, taking readers on a tour of the fundamental concepts of physics, energy, and the climate. Written by Manuel Collares Pereira, a renowned professor, *Jeremias e o Desenvolvimento Sustentável* (Jeremiah and Sustainable Development) is a special edition sponsored by Vanguard Properties, aimed at pupils in Grândola and Alcácer do Sal.**

**R**ita is to study climate-related issues and João renewable energy generation. Their conversations with Professor Nuno, whom they met through their uncle Jeremiah, were decisive in providing them with knowledge about sustainability in fields such as the environment and energy, helping them to choose the courses they are soon to start at university. In fact, Rita and João are characters in the book *Jeremias e o Desenvolvimento Sustentável*, but they could be real people.

Written by Manuel Collares Pereira, formerly a professor at Lisbon's Instituto Superior Técnico and a member of Portugal's prestigious Academia de Engenharia and Academia das Ciências de Lisboa, the book opens up horizons in knowledge, educates for sustainability, and helps people make choices. That is a lot for a single work. In fact, as the late former president of Portugal, Jorge Sampaio, wrote in its preface, it is “an indispensable navigational instrument, like a compass in times of fog.”

Over nearly 200 pages, Collares Pereira – a leading authority on renewable

energy and current scientific advisor to Vanguard Properties – analyses complex topics in a simple manner and in accessible Portuguese. “I think all scientists should make an effort to disseminate their science, especially when this science has so much impact on our lives,” he says.

The narrative is structured around an unlikely friendship between a bus driver, Jeremiah, and a university

professor, Nuno, which extends to the former's niece Rita and her boyfriend, João, who over the course of several encounters talk to each other and reflect on climate change, the environment, nuclear energy, the issues associated with meat consumption, the problem of recycling... Little by little they realise the importance of the choices that everyone must make in order to move towards sustainable development.

“Basically, the characters are representatives of ordinary people, of the general public, who deserve to be aware of these issues because they affect the lives of all of us,” Collares Pereira explains. “I tried to tell a very simple story that portrays life situations that evolve over time.”

Organised in themed chapters, the book includes a speech made by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres at the opening of the Climate Action Summit that took place in September 2019. It can be read from beginning to end, or simply consulted by anyone who wants to delve into one or another subject, since each theme is addressed independently.

Collares Pereira set out on this project with the ambition of reaching the general public, especially the young, and providing them with education on sustainability. The initiative was supported by Vanguard Properties, which organised a special edition to offer to 8<sup>th</sup>- to 12<sup>th</sup>-grade pupils of schools in the municipalities of Grândola and Alcácer do Sal. *Jeremias e o Desenvolvimento Sustentável* is published by Livros Horizonte and is for sale in bookstores across Portugal.



Manuel Collares Pereira presenting his book to pupils from local schools

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