



"Edificio Tridente" Exploring Faro's Largest Modernist Building

Join Leanne Cloudsdale, founder of Concrete communities and Journalist to visit The Edificio Tridente, designed by Manuel Gomes da Costa and completed in 1979, is a striking example of South Modernist architecture in Faro



Case study: Tridente building

1979 -architect Manuel Gomes Da Costa



Edifício Tridente stands as an iconic landmark in Faro's skyline, embodying the ambitious architectural spirit of the mid-20th century.

Completed in **1979** by renowned architect **Manuel Gomes da Costa**, this South Modernist masterpiece represents a significant milestone in Faro's urban development.

As one of the largest architectural constructions in Faro, second only to Quarteirao Branco, Edifício Tridente was conceived as a multimodal complex. Its original design incorporated a diverse range of facilities, including family apartments, shops, a cinema, a garden, and a shopping center.

This multifunctional approach reflected the progressive urban planning ideals of the time, aiming to create a self-contained community within a single structure. The building's design and scale place it firmly within a broader architectural movement that swept across Europe and the United States during the 1960s and 1970s.

During this period, cities worldwide sought to establish their modernity and progress through ambitious architectural projects. Edifício Tridente exemplifies Faro's participation in this global trend, serving as the city's statement of architectural prowess and urban sophistication.



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Architectural Features

- Scale: It's one of the largest architectural constructions in Faro, second only to Quarteirao Branco
- Multimodal Design: Originally conceived as a multifunctional complex, incorporating:
 - Family apartments
 - Shops
 - A cinema
 - A garden
 - A shopping center
- Vertical Elements: The building likely features pilotis (supporting columns), a common element in Gomes da Costa's work, which create an elevated, airy appearance
- Facade Treatment: Gomes da Costa was known for creating dynamic facades with alternating recesses and protrusions, establishing relationships between solid and void elements



Materials and Construction

- Concrete: Reinforced concrete is a primary material, used both structurally and aesthetically. In the 1970s, Gomes da Costa often used concrete in more substantial forms compared to his lighter 1950s designs
- Glass: Large, continuous glass spans are likely featured, another hallmark of Gomes da Costa's style

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- Sun Protection: The building probably incorporates innovative shading systems to protect against intense sunlight, such as: Brise-soleils (sun-breakers)
 - Shade flaps
 - Possibly ceramic grids or loggias
- Aluminum and PVC: These materials may be used for shutters or other lightweight elements, as Gomes da Costa often incorporated them in his 1970s-1980s designs

Today, while some of its original functions may have changed, Edifício Tridente continues to play a significant role in Faro's urban landscape. The building now houses the BPI Bank, and visitors can still experience its unique 1970s atmosphere. The interior of the bank retains much of its original furniture, materials, and design, offering a glimpse into the aesthetic sensibilities of the era



Edifício Tridente not only showcases the architectural vision of Manuel Gomes da Costa but also stands as a testament to Faro's ambition and growth during a transformative period in urban development. Its enduring presence continues to shape the city's skyline and serve as a reminder of the bold architectural movements that defined the latter half of the 20th century.



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