



Photo: M. Gómez / Agencia EFE

essential Interiors

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## Small *grandeur*

The duo Oitoemponto, founded by designers Artur Miranda e Jacques Bec, created the interiors of the new Monumental Palace Hotel, the latest five-star unit in Porto which invokes the city's golden age

A dupla Oitoemponto, formada pelos designers Artur Miranda e Jacques Bec, foi responsável pelos interiores do novo Monumental Palace Hotel, o mais recente cinco estrelas do Porto, que revive os tempos áureos da cidade

TEXT ERNESTO CORVÁL  
PHOTOS FRANCISCO DE ALMEIDA RIAS

**P**orto is experiencing a boom in tourism. This phenomenon, which shows no signs of slowing, has contributed to a vast amount of renovation which is bringing back to life some of the city's most iconic buildings which until recently were abandoned or seriously dilapidated.

One example is the historic "Almeida e Cunha" building, the residence of the sculptor Michelangelo Soai and completed in 1923 on the prestigious Avenida dos Aliados, a short distance from City Hall.

With its distinctive facade in the Beaux Arts style, which was never in vogue at the end of the XIX and start of the XX centuries, "Almeida e Cunha" was designed to be an office building with shops.

**O**rto vive um inédito momento de reivindicação turística. O fenômeno, que não para de aumentar, tem contribuído para um vasto trabalho de reabilitação que está a trazer de volta à vida alguns dos seus edifícios mais marcantes, até aqui devolutos ou em risco de ruína.

Um destes casos é o histórico "Almeida e Cunha" projetado pelo arquiteto italiano Michele Michelangelo Soai e concluído em 1923 na prestigiada Avenida dos Aliados, a curta distância da Câmara Municipal.

Com uma imponente fachada no estilo Beaux arts, nunca muito em moda nos finais do século XIX e principios do XX, o "Almeida e Cunha" foi projetado como edifício das esquadrias e corredores.

Em janeiro de 2010 o prédio térreo é ocupado por um estabelecimento com uma vocação substancialmente diferente, um imponente café cuja abertura um jornal da época registra da seguinte

maneira: "Muitos se admiraram com a audácia com que o Sr. Soai transformou o seu edifício em um luxuoso hotel".

After the 2010 fire, the building was converted into a five-star hotel capable of restoring its former glory and prestige of times past.

More recently, for various reasons, the

property ended up in the hands of the French

hotel group Park Inn by Radisson.

Miranda e Cunha, a well-known entrepreneur in the north of Portugal who had been involved in business,

with the aim of turning the building into a

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