

# Cutting-edge offices in Portugal

BY MIREILLE HANNA

DECEMBER 18, 2021



**P**aulo Merlini Architects adds a signature spiral staircase to the three-story headquarters of two companies in Matosinhos, Portugal. Designed for E-goi, an email marketing platform, and Clavel's Kitchen, an agency that produces digital content for food brands, the project merges an existing warehouse with a new structure to create a fluid office building.

Connection, spatial flexibility and natural light are some of the key elements of this project located in Matosinhos, Portugal. The major challenge for the architects was to unify the two buildings and establish a dynamic between the two businesses that would make them distinct from each other but allow them to work in harmony. Paulo Merlini Architects comments, “One of the most important issues in designing a company’s headquarters is to create a place that expresses and fits with the company’s culture. In this case, E-goi and Clavel’s Kitchen present a rather informal, though extremely professional, type of management and wanted a space that was fluid, egalitarian, heterogeneous and unpretentious”. To establish the diverse program, which includes a photography studio and a dining room for 100 people, the design team inserts a series of wooden boxes that contain more private functions, such as meeting rooms and video conferencing booths, scattered throughout the space “in a kind of organized chaos”.







A concrete spiral staircase serves as the primary vertical circulation path between the three floors and is the fundamental element of the project, thanks to its smooth, sculptural form. Thin balustrades allow light from the roof to penetrate the floor plans, helping to solve the daylight problem. Other strategies to ensure natural light include windows on the rear, west-facing elevation and a fully glazed central façade. In addition, the photography studio on the second floor and the restaurant on the third floor are placed adjacent to this glazed elevation to establish a lively dialogue with the street below.



