

CRAFT & STRUCTURE UNIT

SEMINAR WEEK



FROM OPORTO TO LISBON

01.3.–07.03.2026 / Costs: CHF 900.–
Tutors: Carmen Rist-Stadelmann, Ivo Barão

Our journey traces a diagonal across Portugal, from the Atlantic coast to the country's interior, linking its main architectural poles through the landscapes that shaped them. We begin in Oporto, birthplace of the School of Porto, where precise spatial thinking meets a deep sensitivity to landscape and material. Along the granite coast, Siza Vieira's Casa de Chá da Boa Nova exemplifies this ethos: architecture carefully calibrated to rock, sea, and weather. The Serralves Museum, Park, and FAUP extend this lineage of crafted geometries and attentive observation, echoed in the disciplined work of Souto de Moura and Fernando Távora, where proportion, structure, and context remain inseparable.

Southeast, the terrain softens into the limestone ridges of Coimbra, where architecture engages the city's layered academic, monastic, and industrial history. The School of Coimbra is scenic and quieter, defined by continuity, subtle invention, and sensitive integration with inherited structures. João Mendes Ribeiro's work in the Historic Chemistry Laboratory, Centro de Artes Visuais, and Tropical Greenhouses exemplifies this approach, while Luísa Bebiano's project for the Sociedade Cerâmica Antiga de Coimbra highlights artisanal processes through carefully sequenced spatial narratives that link industrial heritage and contemporary material logic.

Continuing to Lisbon, a river city shaped by light, maritime horizons, and cycles of reconstruction, we encounter key architectural poles: Siza's Pavilhão de Portugal and the Gulbenkian Park—one civic and expansive, the other intimate and gardened. Contemporary interventions, such as Barbas e Lopes's Teatro Thalia or Extrastudio's House for a Musician, demonstrate how Lisbon's luminosity and layered urban fabric continue to inspire nuanced architectural responses.

Finally, the route opens into the Alentejo, where whitewashed villages and CRU Atelier's clay-based architecture merge with corkoak landscapes, introducing a slower, material-driven rural ethos. Our diagonal journey culminates in Estremoz, a city carved in luminous marble where geology and architecture converge—and where our Semester Project will unfold.

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