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# INTERIORS

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## Superstars of Design







Photograph: Shamant Patil

AR. SANDEEP KHOSLA & AMAREESH ANAND



# STUNNING STRUCTURES



SHIRO LOUNGE-BAR, MUMBAI

Sandeep Khosla's breathtaking architectural compositions are defined by their expansive volumes, interplay of vertical and horizontal planes and immaculate minimalism.

Along with firm director **Amaresh Anand**, Bengaluru-based **Khosla Associates** have designed some ground-breaking hospitality and residential projects. The duo believe in contextual architecture and have found innovative ways to use contemporary design sensibility in local context.

This approach has also won them several awards in India and abroad.

After gaining invaluable experience working with renowned Ar. Charles Correa, Ar. Sandeep Khosla set up Khosla Associates in Bengaluru in 1995. Over the years, Sandeep, along with the firm's director Amaresh Anand and their team of talented architects and interior designers, have designed some fascinating and path-breaking projects. "My partner Amaresh plays a pivotal part in the design and ideation process at Khosla Associates and leads a lot of the processes within the firm," Sandeep says.



DPS KINDERGARTEN SCHOOL, BENGALURU





CLIFF HOUSE, KERALA

Speaking about his signature style, Sandeep says, “For climate-sensitive architecture, we use local materials and traditional concepts in new and innovative ways. Transition spaces such as open-to-sky courtyards, verandahs and reflecting pools help in blurring the boundaries between the interior and the exterior environments. This approach often spills into some of our interior spaces too.”

Though Sandeep has made his mark in almost all architectural segments, he tells us that some of his all-time favourites are Touch, Shiro and Roxy in the hospitality segment as they all have allowed him to push his creativity to a new level. In the residential segment, he mentions Manwaring, Fernandes House, Vastu House and Cliff House. For Sandeep, the Cliff House in Kerala was an emotive response to the site. Likewise, Hard Rock Cafe and Atmosphere in the retail space and Nike, MTV and Indya.Com in the corporate segment are close to this architect’s heart.

Though Sandeep has received formal training in architecture from Professional Architecture School at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, his interior design instinct is, nevertheless, exceptional. He feels both disciplines feed off each other and finds their integration to be a more holistic way of approaching design. “My approach to interior design is not mere ‘decoration’ and application of surfaces and materials to a fixed space, but I am rather concerned with the ‘architectonics’ of an interior space, its artistic structure and its experience,” Sandeep further adds.

Like most creative people, Sandeep has been influenced by stalwarts in the field. “In fact, our distinctive style of tropical residential architecture draws inspiration from the works of masters of Asian tropical design such as Geoffrey Bawa and Charles Correa,” he shares. His interior work is influenced and inspired from various sources such as extensive travel, global and local trends, pop culture, lifestyle, fashion and contemporary art.



Khosla Associates has completed several diverse projects. Here's a peek into the firm's prestigious portfolio.

### THE TOWER KITCHEN, BENGALURU

Khosla Associates and graphic designers tsk Design collaborated to design this fine dining restaurant at UB City in Bengaluru. The space comprises a simple and bold typography complemented with playful graphics. The spatial layout has three zones: a foyer at the north end, an intimate indoor lounge-cum-dining area and a semi-open cigar and whiskey lounge.

A series of repetitive three-dimensional, wooden trapezoidal forms are inserted into each of the coffers on the ceiling, which forms a warm textural grid. Flooring in black, rough kadappa stone cut, LED lighting, feature walls are some of the defining elements in the restaurant. But a truly magnificent decor element is the whimsical art installation. Here, the designers have used laser-cut pots, pans, spatulas and whisks on a bright red screen.

Other mid-century style nuances include the fluid red and blue upholstered Saarinen chairs, the service buffet counters with tapered legs and the detailing on the timber-clad ceiling.



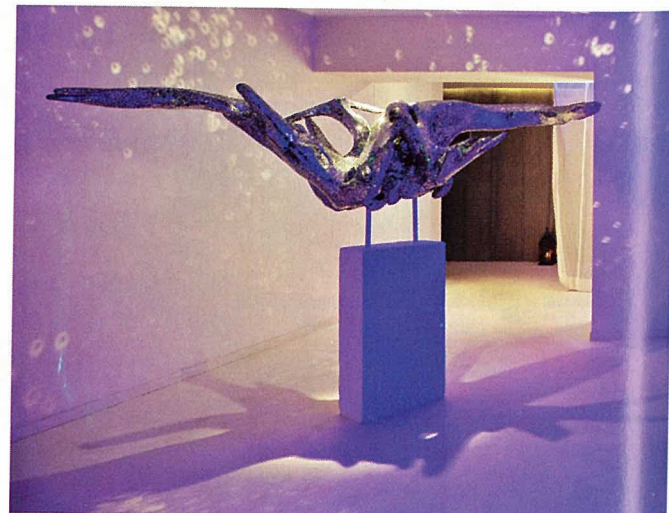
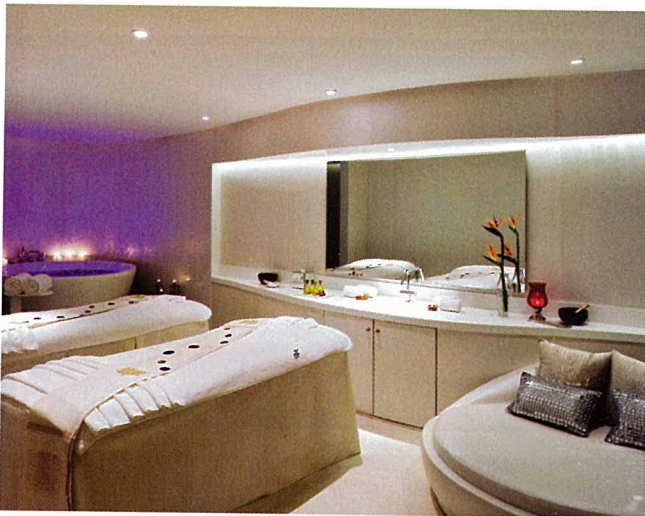


## AURA SPA AT THE PARK HOTEL, HYDERABAD

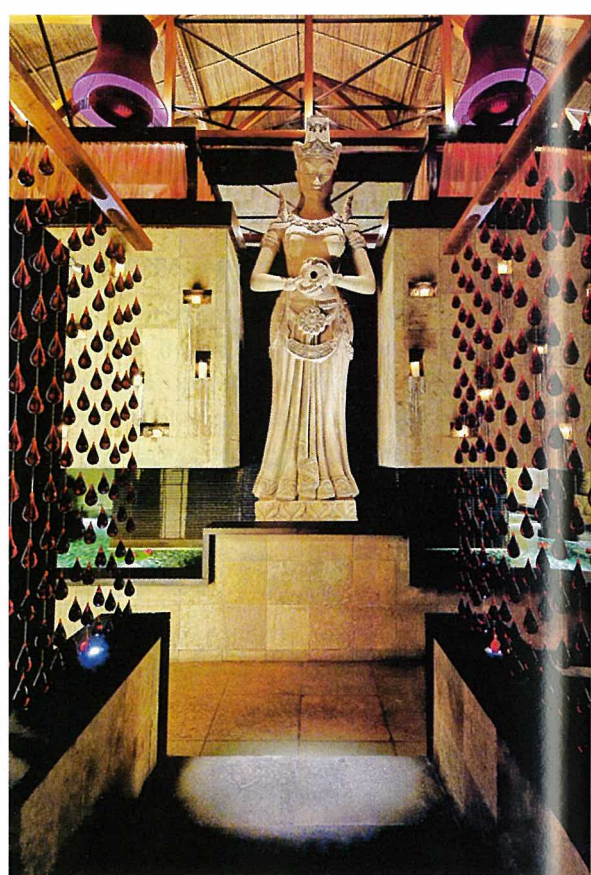
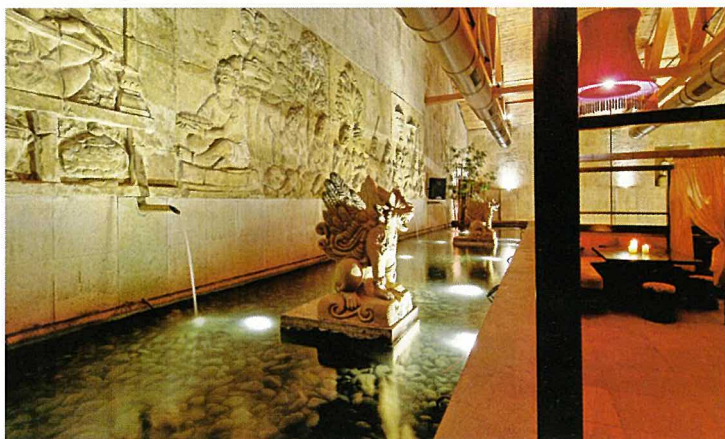
A particularly uninspiring space, devoid of natural light and ventilation was converted by Khosla Associates into a sparkling environment. The design is inspired by the sheen, transparency and whiteness of the Golconda diamond. This basement space has curved corridor walls at the entrance of the spa, built out of edge-polished vertically stacked glass and lit with LED lights. The circular reception area has a fluid reception table and relaxed customer seating sheathed in moulded white resin.

The spa consists of several areas like male and female wet areas with locker facilities, changing rooms, a large jacuzzi and laconium space, gym and salon. The transition area is decorated with a mirrored organic sculpture by French artist Yahel Chirinian and spotlights, creating interesting effects on wall, flooring and ceiling.

Elements like the embossed silver foil work on the entrance wall, eclectic chairs in the treatment rooms and the padded diamond-shaped fabric as upholstery offset the otherwise futuristic interiors.







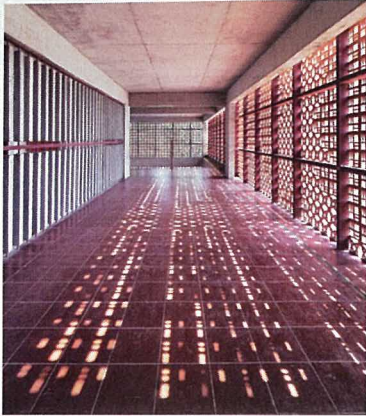
## SHIRO-LOUNGE BAR, MUMBAI

The client wanted the design of this lounge bar to be eclectic, sophisticated and appealing to the cosmopolitan tastes of South Mumbai residents. On entering through a 16 ft. high antique acid-finished metal door, the custom-designed translucent red screen in a teardrop motif on the entrance walkway and 45-ft. high bamboo-clad, dimly lit, pitched ceiling gives a glimpse of the lofty interiors. The 4,000 sq. ft. space is divided into private rooms and the bar area on the lower level and the VIP area on the upper level. The space has an exciting mix of Orient elements such as old wooden blade fans, antique Chinese chests, vast expanses of pebbled water bodies, thickets of Japanese bamboo planting and old Balinese friezes, set against a bold, clean straight lines and contemporary furniture.

The volume of the mill building demanded customization of furniture, objects, light fixtures and accessories. "The most exciting aspect of Shiro's design was the degree of customization we were able to achieve. We hired a team of 10 sculptors in Mumbai to create the larger-than-life sculptures and friezes. Large hanging lamps on the upper level were also designed by us," Sandeep says.

Dominating the central space are three 20-ft. high Balinese consorts pouring water from earthen vessels onto a large moat filled with pebbles and lotus flowers. Multiple niches in different shapes and sizes house statues, Buddha heads and other eclectic objects. Wall friezes in strategic locations blend seamlessly with the stone. Rich furnishings in deep saturated colours such as crimson, magenta, garnet and ochre contrast the otherwise subdued rustic shell.





## DPS KINDERGARTEN SCHOOL, BENGALURU

As the model was to be mostly replicated across several schools in South India, the designers had to create a simple and cost-effective design that could be easily adapted to different sites. The overall master plan comprises a kindergarten, junior, middle and senior school block for a total of 4,000 children. The primary challenge was to design and execute the first 35,000 sq. ft. kindergarten block within six months. Khosla Associates created an efficient modular system that they could use as building blocks. They created a basic module of a 700 sq. ft. classroom that could be repeated horizontally or stacked.

The simplicity of the repetitive exposed concrete structure is what eventually dictated the design outcome as flexible layers were added onto it. A corrugated metal wall was added on all corridors, which would facilitate the speed of construction and is also durable. The corrugated sheets also gave them the opportunity to play with patterns and use tropical colours, typical of the architecture of the region. Other contextual references are the vernacular terracotta *jaalis* that wrap around parts of the building and are included on both sides of each classroom to facilitate cross ventilation. The *jaalis* cut down the sun especially on the western face of the building, which has the breakout areas.

Khosla Associates has incorporated design elements that harness breeze and natural light in order to minimize electrical load, making the project energy-efficient.





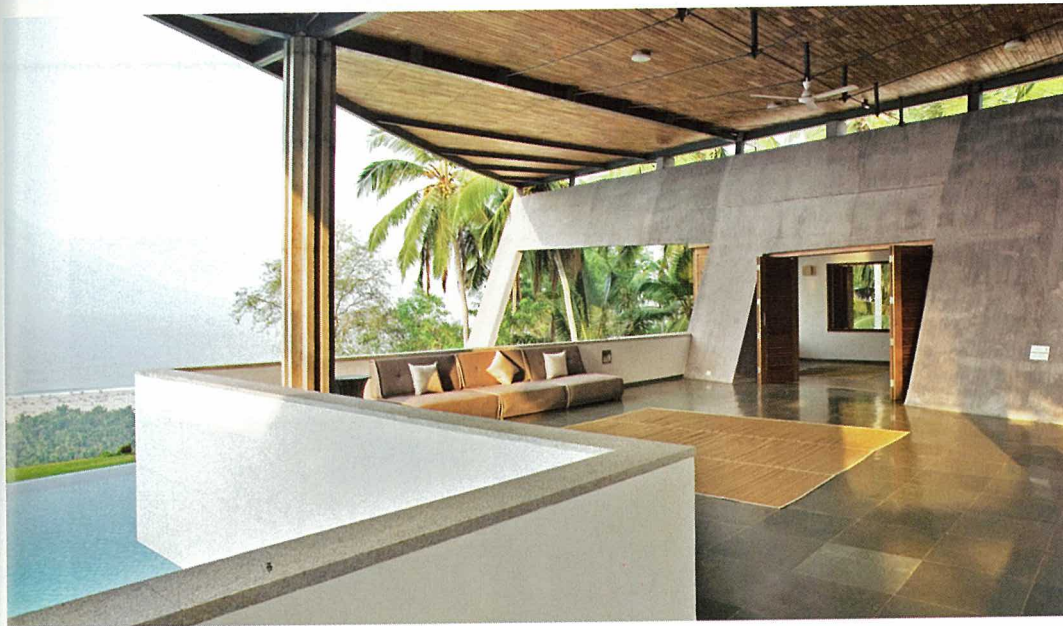


## CLIFF HOUSE, KERALA

This holiday home is located in a fishing village Chowara, 30 minutes from Thiruvananthapuram. The most prominent feature of this structure is the asymmetrical sloping roof set against the fronds of a coconut plantation. Opening its embrace to the warm sea breeze, the home covers an area of 1,397 sq. m. and consists of a large outdoor pool, sun decks and meditation areas along with the usual living areas. A skewed 45-m. long sheer concrete wall supporting the single, lightweight, triangulated canopy lunges out towards the view. The external and internal finishes are polished cement, concrete and rough slate juxtaposed against warm slatted timber and natural local kota stone. Furniture and accessories are kept to a minimal so that the focus is on the natural environment.







Sandeep and Amaresh designed the home keeping a 180° panorama view of the sea in mind. The response to the site was a bold and emotional one as the designers imagined the dramatic wall and roof bringing in the sea, air and the sky. Keeping Kerala's tropical heat in mind, ample overhangs are provided on the main roof to protect against the fierce western sun and monsoon rain. As large expanses of glass would trap the heat in this environment, the architects devised a system of louvered wooden sliding and folding shutters for the doors and windows. These slatted shutters can be modulated and allow uninterrupted air circulation.

Besides designing stunning structures, Sandeep is also lectures at design institutions around the country and is passionate about restoring heritage structures in Bengaluru.

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