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RS 50

IIID-MK award winning home designed
by Riyaz & Simeen Quraishi



An idyllic bungalow in Goa

A Pune bungalow by Varsha
& Deepak Guggari

Swatt/Miers architects design a
bungalow in America

Aditya Birla Financial Services

Sybase, by Planet 3 Architects

A Sea-Side Bungalow by Sandeep Khosla



OUTDOOR LIVING

TEXT: SHWETA KAPUR PHOTOGRAPHS: BHARAT RAMAMRUTHAM



HOLIDAY HOME



Englishman Mike Manwaring had been visiting resorts in Kerala since 1995. So fascinated was he by this verdant state that he asked Bengaluru-based architect Sandeep Khosla, with whom he had a decade old association, to build him a retreat in Chowara, a fishing village, 30 minutes from Thiruvananthapuram.



Perched 200 ft above an expansive stretch of green along the Arabian Sea coast, right at the edge of a cliff, the most prominent feature of this 10,000 sq ft home is its asymmetrical sloping roof. Set against the fronds of a coconut plantation, opening its embrace to the warm sea breezes and mellow with the glow of the setting sun, the bold architecture of the house is remarkable for a skewed 150 ft sheer concrete wall supporting the single, lightweight triangular canopy roof that lunges out towards the view. The external and internal finishes are of polished cement and concrete

juxtaposed against warm slatted timber and natural kotah stone, softened by tropical plants and water bodies. Furniture and accessories are kept to a minimum, so that the focus doesn't shift from the majestic natural environment around the one acre site.

The house was designed by architects Sandeep Khosla and Amaresh Anand of Khosla Associates. Explains Sandeep, 'Capturing the 180 degree panorama of the sea was of primary importance, and so our first response to the site was a bold and emotional one – we imagined the dramatic wall and roof bringing in the sea breeze and the sky, without any barriers!' True to the

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first contextual response, only half of the 10,000 sq ft space is actually defined by four walls. The rest is kept open and permeable to the elements.

'We chose to move away from traditional design practices, since our client and his brief were rather unique. Mike wanted to enjoy the stunning view, a large outdoor pool, several decks, meditation areas but within a natural and unpretentious space. Our design dialogues with him were rewarding and the creative freedom we had was immense.'

The architects have added open-to-sky showers set in courtyards to bring ventilation into the five bathrooms and used courts to introduce outdoor elements into the open voluminous foyer. The foyer extends all the way from the front entrance to the rear deck, from where you can wade straight into the 4,500 sq ft infinity pool. It also serves to separate the private and public spaces. Several guest bedrooms and shaded decks lie to either side of the outdoor pool. The guest rooms connect to each other on the upper level via a walkway. Mike tells me that it was his empathy towards the active fishing community that

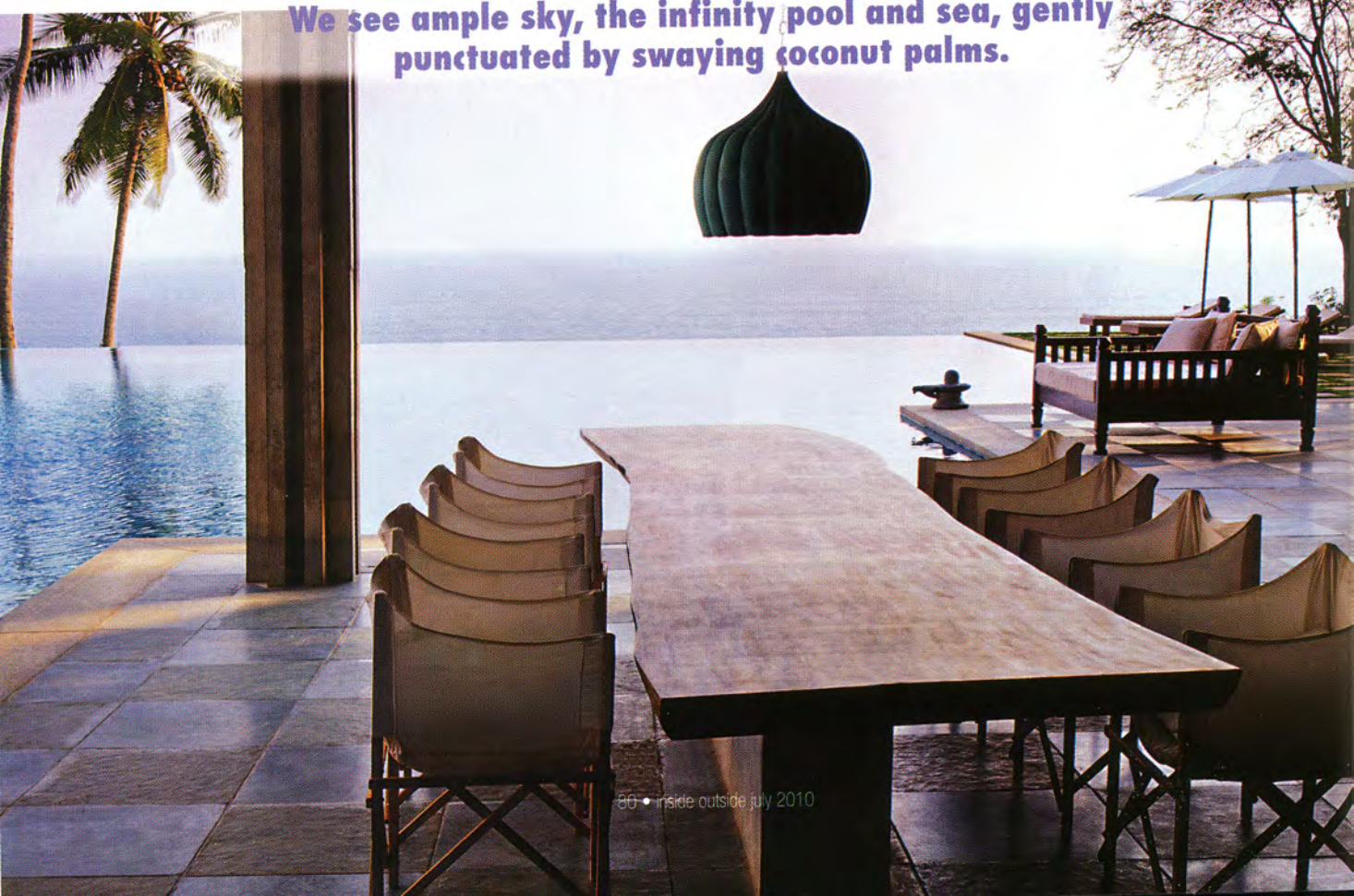


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made him search for a site removed from the beach but the large pool compensates for that.

The entrance of the home faces north-east. The entry walkway is made of a straight line of monolithic stone steps flanked on either side by lush tropical water bodies. 'A concrete wall to the right and a mysterious louvered wood screen wall upfront, allows the architectural design to reveal itself gradually and lets you discover more as it unfolds,' says Sandeep.

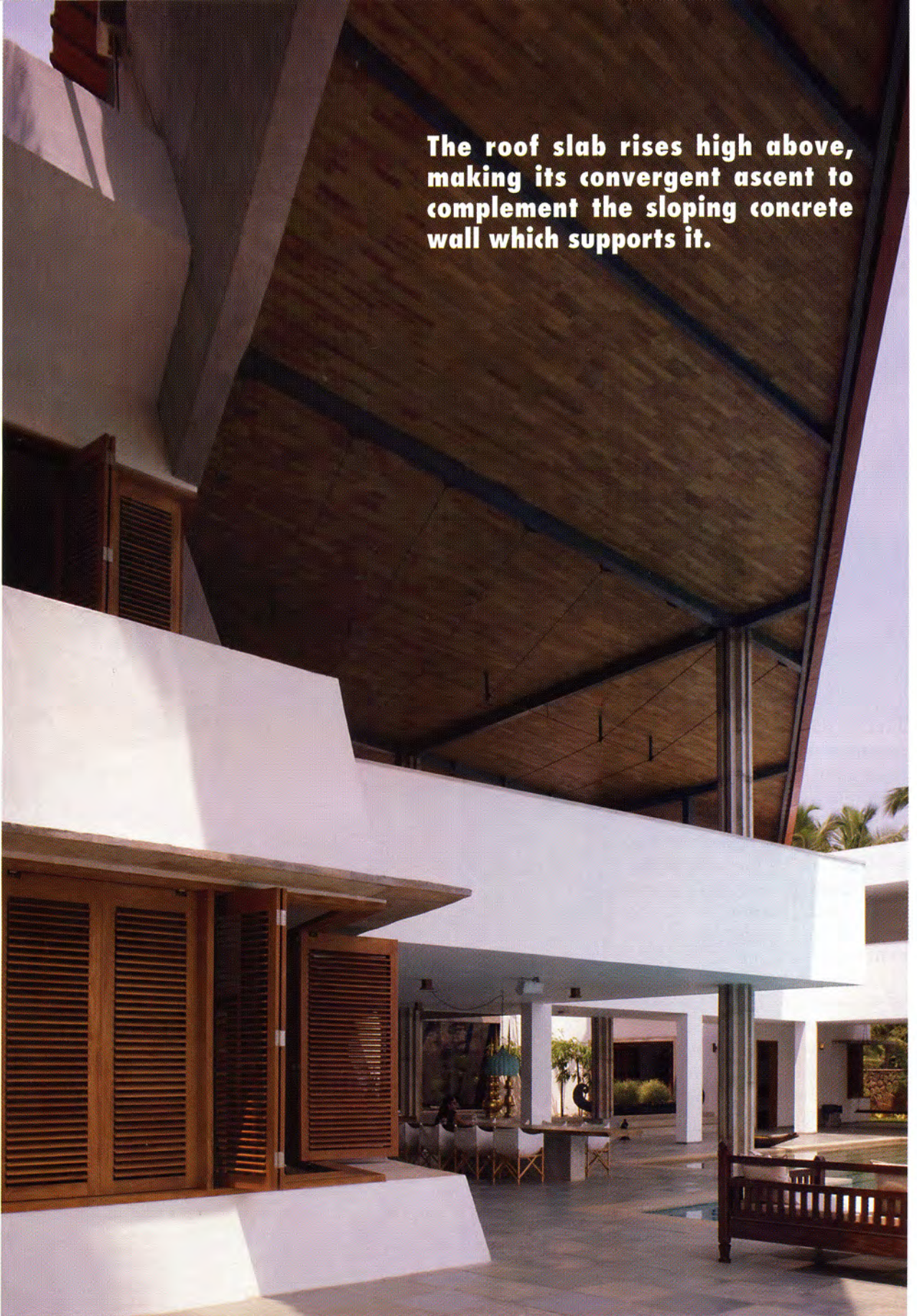
So when you do step under the double-height entry wall, you walk into the breezy 45 ft deep foyer, flanked by the continual concrete wall to the right, which now begins to tilt outwards and gain considerable height. Here, you experience the contrast between the 150 ft length of sheer concrete, rising along the internal staircase, as your eye is drawn up to the natural warmth of the timber panelling attached to the underside of the entire canopy roof.

The foyer gains height and volume, enhancing the view of the Arabian Sea, framed by the portal beams and columns, with the roof slab high above, making its convergent ascent to complement the concrete wall. This foyer celebrates the architects' attempt to blend the natural and man-made environments seamlessly. Viewed through the large framed openings of the exterior walls, we see ample sky, the infinity pool and sea, gently punctuated by swaying coconut palms — a harmonious composition, orchestrated to infuse the space with nature's moods, serene at times, restless, at others.

Mike Manwaring tells me that his story began about three



The roof slab rises high above, making its convergent ascent to complement the sloping concrete wall which supports it.





Wooden sliding and folding shutters were designed for the doors and windows. Their louvres make for uninterrupted air circulation and provide a view of the outside.

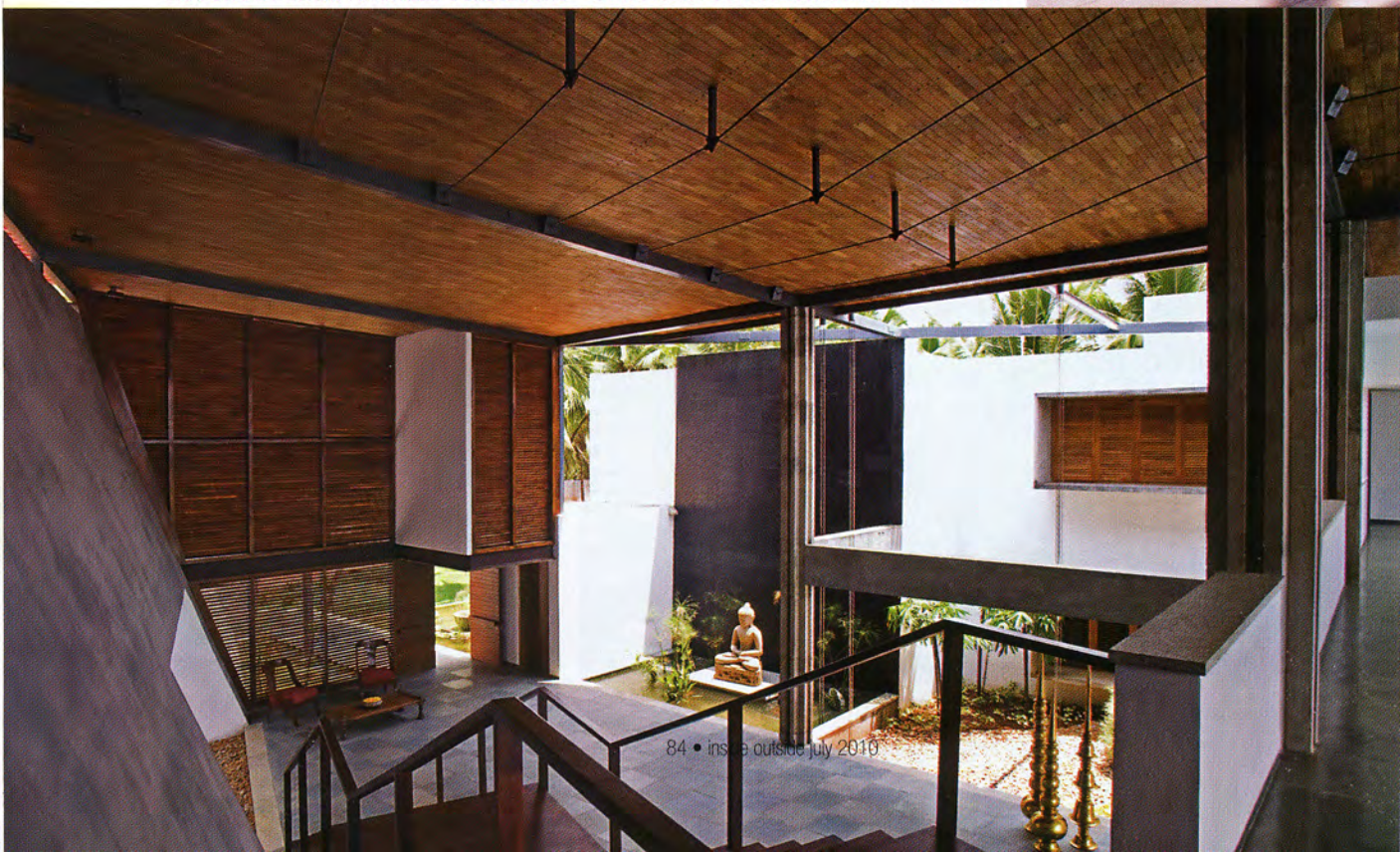


decades ago, when he started to visit India every year. He became an ayurveda enthusiast and liked spending time in Chowara's resorts, in the pursuit of complete wellness. After one such trip, he heard about this site — it was ideal for his purposes. The fishing boats bobbing out at sea, with the eagles and kites soaring above, made for a fascinating landscape. This was in 2004 and despite the distances between Bengaluru, Chowara and the UK, Mike was convinced that if Sandeep was game, the project was his to design.

Large openings were essential to all spaces, to maximise the view and minimise air-conditioning by allowing in seasonal breezes. Since their client was not in the favour of using any glass, Amaresh and Anand devised a



LANDSCAPE DESIGN: HARIYALEE CONSULTANTS STRUCTURAL CONSULTANTS: MANJUNATH & CO





system of wooden sliding and folding shutters for the doors and windows. Louvred versions make for uninterrupted air circulation and are strategically positioned to get a view of the pool and the palette of blues beyond.

In terms of his design inputs, Mike mentions his keenness to use local resources – artisans and materials and also retain as many coconut trees as possible, for an informal garden. Four bedrooms

The breezy 45 ft deep foyer is flanked near the staircase by a concrete wall which tilts outwards and gains considerable height. Your eye is drawn up to the natural warmth of the timber panelling attached to the underside of the entire canopy roof.



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HOLIDAY HOME



for his daughters and their friends were required to meet his family's needs. They intend to be here four months a year, and make it available for holiday rentals otherwise. 'He did not ask for the home to be sealed for security reasons or from the climate; so our design vocabulary speaks of

hardy, weather friendly materials that will likely age gracefully,' sums up Sandeep.

Mike loves the humid Kerala climate and now that his stunning holiday retreat in God's own country is complete, he can pursue his personal goals with renewed energy! 

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