

"We finish each other's sentences"

—SANDEEP KHOSLA

"Our working relationship is like a very happy marriage. I look up to him because he's very wise but we're also friends. We discuss design, of course, but since we've developed this friendship, we talk about our lives and spend time together outside of the workspace," says Amaresh Anand, describing a working relationship most of us wistfully dream of—in the day and age of un-empathetic bosses and colleagues you can't even stand to chatter idly with. Founder-principal Sandeep Khosla and principal Amaresh Anand tell us just how they achieved the perfect partnership at their award-winning architecture and design firm, known for its 'India modern' sensibility.

WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE

Says Khosla, "Amaresh joined as an architect three years after I established the firm and became an associate very shortly, and five years ago, became a partner and now principal. He's disciplined, humble and obviously, there is a great synergy between us—we even finish each other's sentences and that's why we've been able to work together and even become great friends." One of the reasons they've been able to progress smoothly is the fact that their day-to-day roles are clearly defined.

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

While Khosla focuses on concept design and design development in architecture and interiors along with large sweeping moves, furniture, light fixtures and accessory styling, Anand oversees the actual construction of a project, architectural and interior lighting design and detail-

ing. Says Khosla, "From design concept to realisation, there is a lot of back and forth between us. When differences arise, we've learnt to address issues and really talk it out. Ultimately, it's not about who's right and who's wrong; it's about delivering a good product and ensuring the clients are happy." >

THE A-TEAM
Sandeep Khosla (right) and Amaresh Anand describe their work relationship as being in a "very happy marriage"

SANDEEP KHOSLA, 46, AND AMARESH ANAND, 40, *Khosla Associates*

PROFESSIONAL PARTNERS, BENGALURU



HAB. CARLOS JAVIER BAUTISTA FERRER. IMAGE BY JUAN CARLOS BAUTISTA. PHOTOGRAPHY BY MOF SCHMIDTKE



the VERANDAH life

Writer LAVANYA
SANKARAN'S
Bengaluru bungalow
is the ideal refuge—
a serene mix of
modernity, tradition
and a whole lot
of heart.

By URVASHI KESWANI

Photographer

SHAMANTH J PATIL

Interior stylist

KRISHNA KALRO

Fashion stylist

CHANDNI SAREEN

The living space features a gabled roof and a 30 ft-high teak bookshelf with a moveable ladder, customised by Khosla Associates; a red Husk chair by Patricia Urquiola for B&B Italia sits on yellow Jaisalmer stone; the Cloud lamps are by Frank Gehry for Vitra



An exterior view of the house; the bedrooms hover over the swimming pool to provide shade



Sankaran with her husband, Nikhil Kumar, daughter Arya and Goldspot, the Golden Retriever

VOGUE

As I settle down at Lavanya Sankaran's convertible pool table, Haiku the rescued cat tiptoes past; Goldspot, the genteel Golden Retriever, calmly looks on; and Sankaran's davara tumbler—her Tamilian coffee cup and saucer—clinks as she creates a sea of froth. It's day-break in the Sankaran-Kumar household and sunlight streams in. Nikhil Kumar, Sankaran's husband—founder and managing director of TD Power Systems—ensured that the vast openings in their home catch the rays as they fall and every breeze, so crisp Bengaluru air is aplenty and their “verandah life” is astir.

For the power couple and their teenage daughter, Arya, home needed to be an antidote to their Type A work lives: a tranquil retreat that brought the outside in, where they could breathe, unwind

and be themselves. “We’re relaxed, slouchy people,” Sankaran says, “We’re in track pants, put our feet up, we have a Type Z family relationship.” And so the writer gave architects Sandeep Khosla and Amaresh Anand of Khosla Associates a 12-page brief: “They cracked up but I didn’t know better!” They loved it and longtime friend Khosla says that this, combined with wonderful conversations, was remarkable—“Architects are always inspired by a good brief and people who put a lot of thought into how they live.”

LAY OF THE LAND

Atop a slight rise, the land they bought could not have better lent itself to their needs. Acquired as two different plots seven years apart, serendipity was in full play. The cul-de-sac neighbourhood is bordered by Indian Air Force property on two sides, and two science institutes on the other, rendering it “gorgeous in today’s Bangalore (sic).”

With colonial nostalgia thrown into the bricolage of everything else the couple wanted: clean lines, South Indian architecture and art, contemporary whimsy, a swimming pool, just three bedrooms across 12,500 sq ft and two levels; their home is more than >

HAIR: CARLOS SAVIDRAN; MAKE-UP: JEAN CLAUDE BICQUINE; PRODUCTION: BJORNSCHUTZNER; ON: NIKHIL: LENNIH-SHIRT; ARYA: MICHAEL POES; JEWELS: COLE HAAN; RING: PER OWN; AARIYA: DENNA DRESS; ZARA: CH. GOLDSPOT: SCARF: PUCCE; WATCH: MICHAEL POES; JEWELS: COLE HAAN; RING: PER OWN; AARIYA: DENNA DRESS; ZARA: CH. GOLDSPOT: SCARF: PUCCE



Diesel's Chubby Chic armchair shares space with the green M'Afrique Shadowy seater by Tord Boontje, both for Moroso. The terrazzo tiles are designed by Khosla Associates

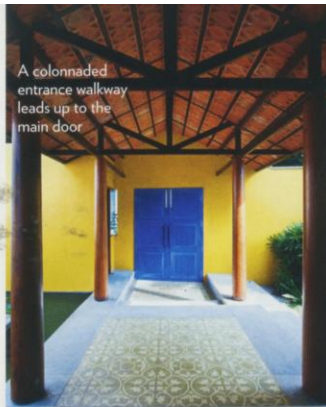
they ever imagined. "It's true to who we are as people—modern with cultural touches—and the genius of the architects," Sankaran says. "I had this grand realisation that good architecture is a lot like good storytelling. You take people on a journey and they're not the same as when they entered; it's transformative, and that is what this space is." She speaks about formal corporate dinners that they host, where 45 minutes in, shoes are off and ties are strewn as guests stroll along the lawn.

LAYER UPON LAYER

But the hub of the house is the kitchen. "We eat simple food—dal and a sabzi mostly—but there is far more masala, life and drama here because of my staff." Deeply disturbed by the 'us versus them' mindset, the owners have created a staff common room: "an informal work-life space" replete with a television, sofas, bedrooms to nap in, a sit-out and even a treadmill.

A strong reflection of all the layers of their lives, the home is ecologically sensitive too—with a rainwater harvesting system and photovoltaic solar panels. Sankaran's sacred writing study (with her very own "Peter Pan grotto") and Kumar's reputed beer cellar co-exist in the basement. An abundance of books line the open plan library-cum-living room while the church-like foyer doubles up as an art gallery. Antique urlis from Kumar's mother sit beside iconic furniture, and none of the stone is imported.

And where they "actually live"—the vast, 1,500 sq ft verandah outfitted with eclectic cluster furniture that had to pass Kumar's comfort "sit-test"—plays host to a lot: hot chai when the rain falls, day meals, dips in the pool, Sunday sessions with friends, Kumar's baked breads and Aarya's pizza skills; and most of all, three happy people in their happy place. ■



A colonnaded entrance walkway leads up to the main door



The master bedroom features painted Kerala roof tiles



A sink-in pink chair and red stool create a bright contrast



Kartell's Bloom pendant light hangs over a rosewood desk that belonged to Lavanya's writer-grandmother



The modest entrance is no indication of what lies beyond



HAIR: CLOUTIER; STYLING: DOSSA; FERRITIN; EUJUP; JEAN-CLAUDE BIGNONNE; PRODUCTION: BURNIS; SCHNEIDER

The tropical Puducherry-influenced entrance courtyard embraces the Japanese concept of wabi-sabi