

DESIGN DESTINATION : DUBAI

UNCOVERED : ZEPPELIN DESIGN

SPECIALIST : STUDIO COPPRE

HOME REVIEW

VOL 15 ISSUE 01 JANUARY 2016 TOTAL PAGES 140

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ESSENTIALLY SUSTAINABLE
BY RHIZOME AND ERA

KAMAT AND ROZARIO ARCHITECTURE
BASKING IN RECYCLED GLORY

WITH ITS BACK TO THE WALL

AN INTROVERTED HOUSE BY KHOSLA ASSOCIATES

MADE IN INDIA PRODUCTS & IDEAS THAT CHAMPION THE MADE IN INDIA CAUSE



Shrugging aside the norm for siting a structure on a plot, Khosla Associates have located this inward-facing house near the boundary wall abutting a street in Bengaluru, while efficiently maintaining privacy, light and vistas on the inside of the home.

When a client has a plot of land with a public road abutting it, where would most architects locate the house? As far away from the road as possible, in order to maintain privacy, right? Sandeep Khosla and Amaresh Anand of Khosla Associates have turned this tried and tested solution on its head.

What they have dubbed L-Plan House, because of its shape, hugs the boundary wall of the plot on the side closest to the road, but turns its back on the coming and goes outside, by facing the vista of green which unfolds on its inside. Straddling two sides of the corner site, the solution it adopts may seem counterintuitive to some.

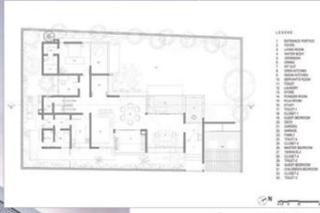
Text By Devyani Jayakar
Photographs By Shamarth Patil J.



The clients, a young couple, didn't give an intense brief to the architects. Already comfortable with the design sensibilities and vocabulary of Khosla Associates, known for creating easy transitions between indoor and outdoor spaces, all they asked for was a compact house which maximises light and air. But this turned out to be a challenge for the architects, because privacy from the street had to be maintained, without compromising on any other essentials.

The solution to this dilemma, was to create two different faces for the house - an introverted exterior facing the street, and an extroverted interior elevation facing the open space in the west and north. The surfaces of the facade are a mix of white stucco and polished cement, with timber cladding on the underside of the roofs. The street-facing massing is more opaque, while the garden facing elevations provide transparency and views.

Entry to the house is from the east through a doorway that frames a shallow water body through a large picture window. This creates a visual connection from the street to the garden. Two sloping roofs articulate the importance of the living room and the master bedroom and simultaneously lunge out into views of the garden from either end of the 'L-Plan'. A third roof over the yoga room slopes outward onto the street corner," says Sandeep Khosla, Principal Architect at Khosla Associates.



Ground floor plan of the L-Plan house.

"These roofs have a curious detail, as they are wedged within bold vertical fins and connected with a skylight-spacer on either end. The resultant effect makes them seemingly float within their respective volumes," says Sandeep.

The ground floor houses a guest room, study, puja room and two kitchens other than the living and dining areas. The first floor has a master bedroom, child's bedroom, yoga room and a family area. Large sweeps of polished Indian grey kota stone flow through the spaces.

The double height ceiling in the living room is emphasised by large floor-to-ceiling windows with sheer blinds that provide filtered light from the harsh afternoon western sun, yet open up to allow the morning sun from the east. The living areas open onto a wooden deck and garden.

"With about 4,500 sq ft of built up space, this home appears to be larger than it is. The internal spaces also interact with one lung space, instead of several different courtyards," says Sandeep. "Moreover, this large space actually gets used, because of the temperate climate which Bengaluru enjoys for most of the year."

The foyer opens up to a double height living room, which flows into an equally spacious dining area with an open kitchen. The family room on the upper level interacts with the double volume of the dining and living below. Key to the idea of flow are gestures of connection and circulation, which inform the way the spaces are composed.

The interior is young and non-fussy, with most of the artwork being prints, since there were budgetary considerations. "Prints, which have been sanctioned by the artists were sourced from 'The Art Collective,'" says Animesh. All the fabrics are natural, with beige sheer linen for the blinds at the windows, colourful woven flat weave shurries from Jajpur in geometric patterns and textured, layered bedspreads.



There is a deliberate segregation of PUBLIC AND PRIVATE spaces. **HOW the LAYOUT of this HOME.**



Section of the U-Plan house.

A relaxed elegance enriched by accents of rich colours and warm textures. There is an easy flow and the interiors play a supporting role, rather than overpower the architecture.

"I'm a big fan of mid-century modern furniture. So you'll find a retro aesthetic at play here, with inspiration from Scandinavian design," says Sandeep. Iconic chairs by Wegner, Shell, Jacobson Swan and a Saarinen Womb chair sit unselfconsciously in the living spaces, juxtaposed with equally celebrated light fixtures by Louis Poulsen, Foscarini and Tom Dixon.

As much sculptors of space and curators of fine objects as they are architects, Khosla Associates create ultra-glamorous, design-filled structures that appeal to more than just the eye. While they are certainly artisans of what constitutes good taste, they never lose sight of the final objective - spaces which are elevated and made distinctive by good design.

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