

HOMES STYLED WITH LUXE

LUXURY HOMES ARE GETTING A NEW TWIST OF DÉCOR, WHERE THERE IS FOCUS ON DETAILING AS WELL AS A PRACTICAL THRUST THAT DOES NOT COMPROMISE AESTHETICS

BY BINDU GOPAL RAO



IMAGE: PELICAN GROVE BY WAA ASSOCIATES IS AN APARTMENT COMPLEX THAT OVERLOOKS A LAKE IN BENGALURU.



1. Vyoma Patwa Motiramani, principal architect, Design Lab Vyoma.

2. Shitesh Agrawal, MD, Sankalp Designers.

3. An outdoor space with a gazebo designed by Sankalp Designers.



Luxury homes are evolving amidst this pandemic to keep the focus on homes that are both user friendly and maintenance-free. A dedicated workspace that functions as a work-from-home area is also being seen in homes.

DO THE 'NEW'

Designers are exploring newer layout trends for designing luxury homes, like creating different smaller pockets of spaces within larger spaces.

"Today multiple larger gathering spaces within the house have reduced and is substituted with more work from home spaces, multifunctional spaces, workout areas and entertainment zones. In terms of materials, a lot of new-age composite, technology-created materials are being accepted and widely used. This not only gives luxury homes a totally new dimension but also a refreshing and eco-friendly space," says Vyoma Patwa Motiramani, principal architect, Design Lab Vyoma. Classic-style homes are growing in popularity nowadays as well as modern or contemporary homes.

"Earthen ethnic houses have also become popular amongst buyers. People like to opt for bolder colours to highlight a section or feature of their home, while they go for subtle colours in other places," says Shitesh Agrawal, MD, Sankalp Designers.

Luxury homes feature amenities such as a gym and steam room, kid's activity rooms, sports rooms, home theatre, open terrace, infinity pools, private spa, tennis courts, home

automation, meditation room, abundant storage spaces, and private home office space. Manasa Kasa, interior design head, Hocomoco, opines, "A visible trend is a demand for affordable luxury or compact luxury housing amongst the Indian urban middle-class/upper-middle-class. These aspirational luxury homes offer modern amenities at an affordable price point. Apart from expensive furniture and décor, people are looking for more personal luxury factors to meet their luxury comfort requirements.

OUTDOOR CUES

The need to bring outdoor spaces into one's home is a top trend for 2021. Given the experience of last year with the lockdown, outdoor spaces are taking center stage in interior design. Mayank Ruia, CEO, MAIA Estates, avers, "The swelling popularity of outdoor cooking and garden gatherings has been especially noticeable in an era of social distancing. Buyers want buildings with big gardens and open spaces. They prefer staying safe indoors and therefore indulge with their families in exclusive dinner and lunches, organized within the building facility."

There has been a rising demand for co-working spaces and outdoor spaces in the residential sector. "The consumer today is taking care of health which is the ultimate substance and authenticity. After months of being stuck inside homes, buyers are prioritizing fresh air and open outdoor spaces as the focus of luxury living. There is now a higher provision for small on-site parks, multiple outdoor areas per building,



and an increased seating and activity options," says Abhigyan Neogi, principal architect & founder, Chromed Design Studio.

THOUGHTFUL HOMES

The way we look at our homes today has changed immensely due to the pandemic. "In the luxury segment, I see many people spending more time in their getaway homes like farmhouses or holiday homes. In terms of city living a lot of people prefer larger size apartments with all the amenities included so that the family is self-sufficient within the property," says Smitha Zachariah, creative head, ZXP Design.

Theme-based luxury residences are in great demand among HNIs and NRIs. Homebuyers are looking for larger-than-life, 'theme-based residences' which itself is a glamorous concept. "Developers are offering innovative theme-based projects ranging from cultural themes like Mediterranean, Spanish, Japanese, Roman and Greek to hobby-based themes like sports, art, etc. This trend is here to stay in the luxury housing segment with more focus on personal workspace which was primarily 'small office home office' (SOHO)," says Vineet Nanda, director, Sales & Marketing, Krisumi Corporation.

BALANCING ACT

Luxury has become mostly about multi-purpose-driven usable spaces that cater to a seamless lifestyle encompassing opulence and comforts. It is no longer about flamboyant displays of wealth.

"The first word that comes to my mind when I think of the new definition of luxury is 'minimalism', being more subtle with luxury design. Materials, furniture, and accessories with a luxury touch including majorly handcrafted stuff made from purer materials are absolutely on fleek like rich fabrics, mirrors and textured metals, interesting textures such as parchment or eglomise mirror and veneers with varying tones and lacquer finishes and a lot of textured fabrics such



as suede, wool and bouclé for upholstery pieces, which lend themselves to the rounder, softer furniture. Clear spaces are becoming more desirable with few furniture pieces as they glorify simplicity," says Aakanksha Shridhar, principal design director, Aakanksha Shridhar Designs.

DESIGN MANTRA

Luxury designs today refer to how different elements are brought together to create a larger than the typical effect. "This ranges from spatial effects on a macro level to the bespoke fabrics you use for the sofa. The spectrum which



4. A living room with beige hues designed by Hocomoco a tech-based building construction start-up, headquartered in Hyderabad.

5. Entertainment area for a luxury apartment designed by La Sorogeeeka Associates.

6. Manasa Kasa, interior design head, Hocomoco.

7. Mayank Ruia, CEO, MAIA Estates.

8. Abhigyan Neogi, principal architect & founder, Chromed Design Studio.



9. Smitha Zachariah, creative head, ZXP Design.

10. Vineet Nanda, director, Sales & Marketin, Krisumi Corporation.

11. A home that embodies everything luxury by Urban Zen.



defines an interior project from ordinary to premium is huge, and not to mention comes with a price tag," says Pankaj Poddar, co-founder, Hipcouch. Large spaces, tall ceilings, and high luxe is the new trend for mega homes today. Luxury homes are not just about design aesthetics, they also focus on amenities and functionality.

"As per aesthetics, the trend has moved more towards simpler designs complemented with dramatic art. Nowadays clients prefer having spaces designed in their house catering to different activities such as a study room, gymnasium and entertainment lounge. The client seeks a luxury residence that focuses on a work-life balance culture. The COVID-19

pandemic has changed the requirements of a home to include entertainment at home, with amenities such as spas, 5.1 surrounds sound Dolby atmosphere home theatres to get a cinematic experience at home, enormous dens with bowling, a pool, DJ deck and the like," explains Kashish Raheja, creative director, La Sorogeeke Associates.

TECH TRENDS

Home automation has received a thrust in luxury homes especially touch-free electronics and sensor-based fittings. Lighting solutions that use motion sensors, emission-free paints. Cast in situ flooring materials and metals like brass, in furniture, or

CASE STUDY

NIKHIL KAMATH'S HOME, CO-FOUNDER OF ZERODHA

Each room has its own little world of colours, textile and forms, borrowed and married from school of aesthetic. Every element used is ethical, sustainable, custom made, sourced, repurposed or restored locally from a small medium and macro business. Sounak Sen Barat, co-founder & creative director, House of Three, says, "our approach to design is more holistic, it isn't just the physical tangible aspects that matters, what matters is to translate a Nikhil's energy and overall psyche into a space that they can call home". The interiors for Nikhil's house were designed keeping in mind the true vision of design sustainability, to showcase design-based collaborations, highlight the beauty of Indian luxury and the art of being self-sufficient as a country/industry. Every piece from every collection is a celebration of India in not just the textile and embroideries, but also in its intensely researched historical/cultural anecdotes of India's magnanimous past.



Sounak Sen Barat, co-founder & creative director, House of Three.



CASE STUDY

SONAKSHI SINHA'S HOME BY ART DIRECTOR AND INTERIOR DESIGNER, RUPIN SUCHAK

Sonakshi Sinha who resides with her family in their bungalow Ramayan in Mumbai has got the top floor redesigned for herself. The entire space predominantly has been layered with marine plywood, 11 mm to be technically correct and has been clouded over a framework of teak all over and across initially. "When we entered the space, it was a very old style, old school design. It had layering of embedded plywood and casing of teak wood panels of 6 inches which occupied a lot of space and at places even the doors did not have enough space. So, what we did strategically was that we opened out the entire cladding and Inter cladding of whatever framework there was, which gave us a lot of breathing space to the entire structure. Now it comes out as very light and very open," says Suchak. Then the team finally finished it out with paints and distressing it out in terms of the products. They have specifically designed products for the space. Regular grill work has been incorporated in a very boho form and clever use of art-deco, modern Memphis style decor which has been made right at the entrance which is a division door between the lift area and the living space. Alpna of luxury label Alpna-Neeraj and Sounak Sen Bharat for Nikhil's home.



Rupin Suchak.



12. Seth's Residency, a 5000 sq-ft home in Hiranandani Estate — Thane, has a Victorian style interiors.

13. Aakanksha Shridhar, principal design director, Aakanksha Shridhar Designs.

14. Pankaj Poddar, co-founder, Hipcouch.

CASE STUDY

SHUBHRA CHADDA'S HOME, CO-FOUNDER AND CREATIVE HEAD, CHUMBAK

Shubra and Vivek together designed their 4700 sq.ft penthouse in Bangalore's upscale Indiranagar with a vision of building a blank canvas and playing with colors through accents. The penthouse in Indiranagar is where the Chumbak founders reside with their daughter. The kitchen is designed to give a Brooklyn loft feel that is open and ventilated. The wooden floorings all over the house were brought into to give an element of comfort and warmth to the house. The colours used across are peach, Mustard, olive and everything in that palate. A lot of souvenirs and trinkets from their travels are placed across the house signifying their wanderlust souls. As a founder of a design rich brand, Shubra and Vivek don't follow trends but love to mix and match prints and colors which will be clearly visible. Shubra Chadda boasts of her green fingers as she takes care of over 200 plants. "The house sees a vivid use of soothing colours like teal, aqua and blues. Most of the furniture is given a distressed look so that the colours in the background pop up without being too overwhelming. The house does not have a television in the living room and guests first see a huge bookshelf which has books from different genres, mostly travel, since both of us are avid travelers," says Chadda.



Shubra Chadda.



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as accents in wall cladding are popular. People love to have automation in their homes. 'Alexa' and 'Siri' based technology in automation is a new age facility that people are excited to have in their homes.

"We feel that the layers of automation must be carefully thought of since it depends on the lifestyle of the people. In some cases, most of the facilities won't be used even after successful installation," said Amrish Patel and Darshan Soni, founders, Apical Reform Studio.

Newly advanced security systems are trending as they make residents feel safe and sound in a luxury home. Latest exterior cameras are now a common component that strengthens and safeguards against potential break-ins by implement-

ing night vision capabilities. "Another example is fingerprint recognition, which is used to protect locked safes, vaults, and private areas. Automation features are key in modern homes. Many updated residencies contain controlled lights, shades and temperatures along with voice activation abilities to create a lifestyle of ease," says Rahul Singhla, director, Mapsko Group.

GO GREEN

Concrete exposed as well as finished surface is also seen used in multiple ways to enhance its true qualities and bring out the calm and the cool of each space. The designing of an eco-friendly luxury residence primarily entails controlling the



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15. Kashish Raheja, creative director, La Sorogeeeka Associates.

16 & 17. Amrish Patel and Darshan Soni, founders, Apical Reform Studio

18. Sankalp Designers have designed this luxury family room with accents of beige and grey.

19. A luxurious living room in a high-rise apartment in a prime location in Ahmedabad by the Apical Reform Team.



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micro-climate of the structure.

"If you are located in a hotter climate it would mean orientating the home in accordance to the winding path, creating green covers in places such as roof-tops to cool the levels below, or deflecting the heat falling upon the exterior walls by using screens or awnings. Similarly, it would mean responding to questions of heat retention for cooler climates, reducing airflow, humidity, etc. Materials play the next big role, like

applying or modifying natural and locally sourced materials in creative ways," says Siddharth Sirohi, founder, Baro Design.

Krsnaa Mehta, founder & executive director, India Circus, adds, "I see more and more developers sourcing high-quality and environmentally friendly materials locally. Preference for naturally lighted interiors while designing. And an inclination towards sustainability with rainwater harvesting and use of renewable energy."

TREND CHECK

When speaking of luxurious, contemporary homes the two things that play a large role are the design highlights and the elements that support the highlight. "While designing, we have the power to cast a spotlight on one feature in the entire room and then make sure the entire look levels up when the highlights and its complementing elements are aligning with each other. Rare stones clad and backlit on walls, metals laid in the floor, dazzling accent lighting, tufted furniture, boiserie on the walls and staying true to the materials are a few elements to name that will never go out of style for a luxury home," says Rohit Suraj, CEO & design director, Urban Zen.

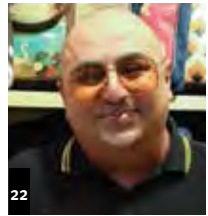
Personalisation and customisation are the keys, wherein the trend has become anything that is unconventional and away from the actual market-driven trends. "People look forward to tailor-made houses to fit in their own definition of luxury. For instance, we are currently designing a mountain residence with a personalised indoor car museum with over 40 vintage cars assimilated inside the residence itself. Luxury homes are now all about being exclusive and showcasing a nuance in concepts, rather than the client adapting to a select over-used or conventional concept style," says architects Shivani Khanna and Debaditya Goswami, co-founders and principal architects, Studio Crypt. As a category that has seen sustained growth despite the pandemic, luxury homes are certainly the flavour of the season. **25**



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20. Rahul Singhla, director, Mapsko Group.

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