

GREENSPEAK : KUNDOO ANAGRAM UNCOVERED MELBOURNE : A DESIGN DESTINATION

HOME REVIEW

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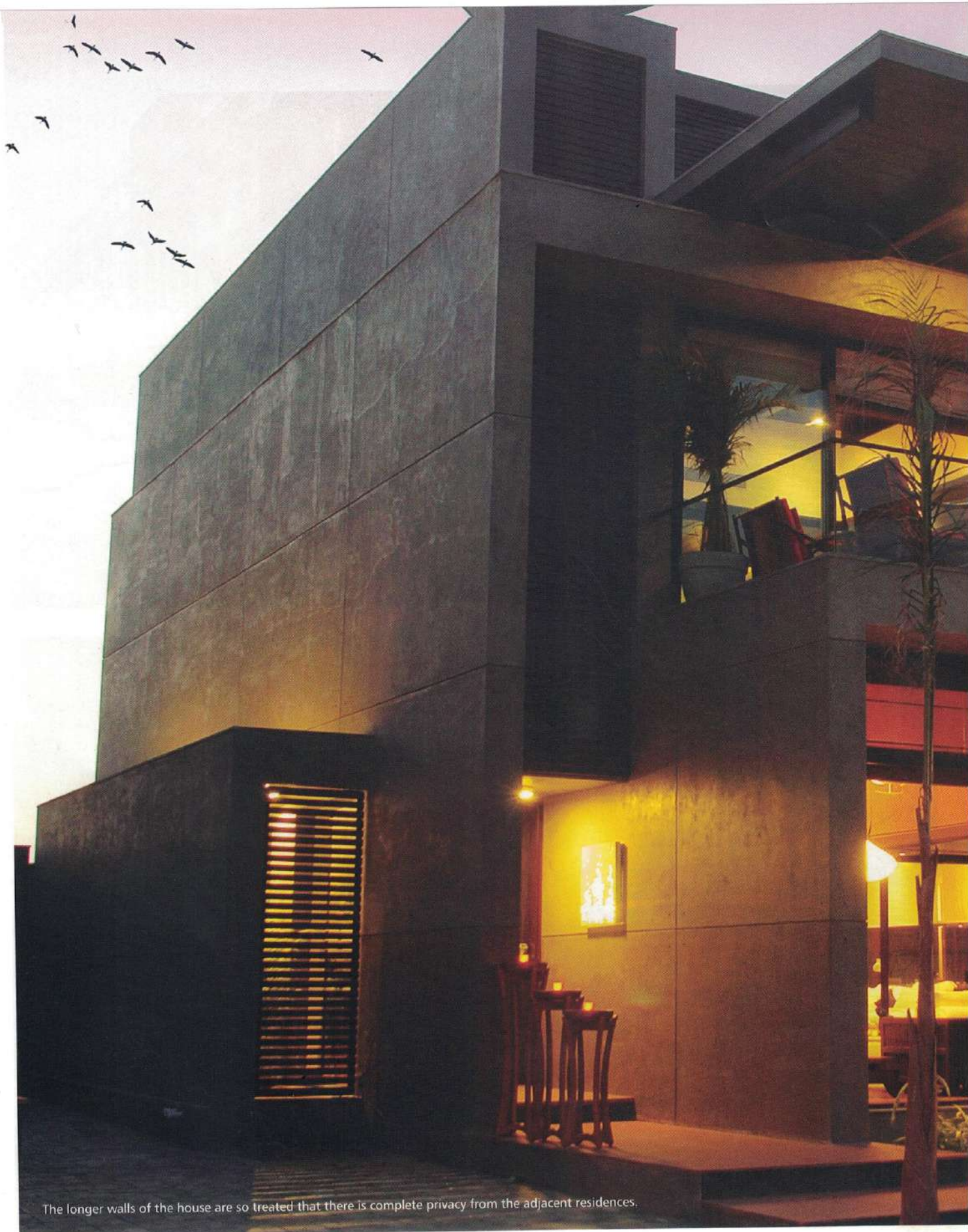
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PALINDA KANNANGARA
AN URBAN OASIS

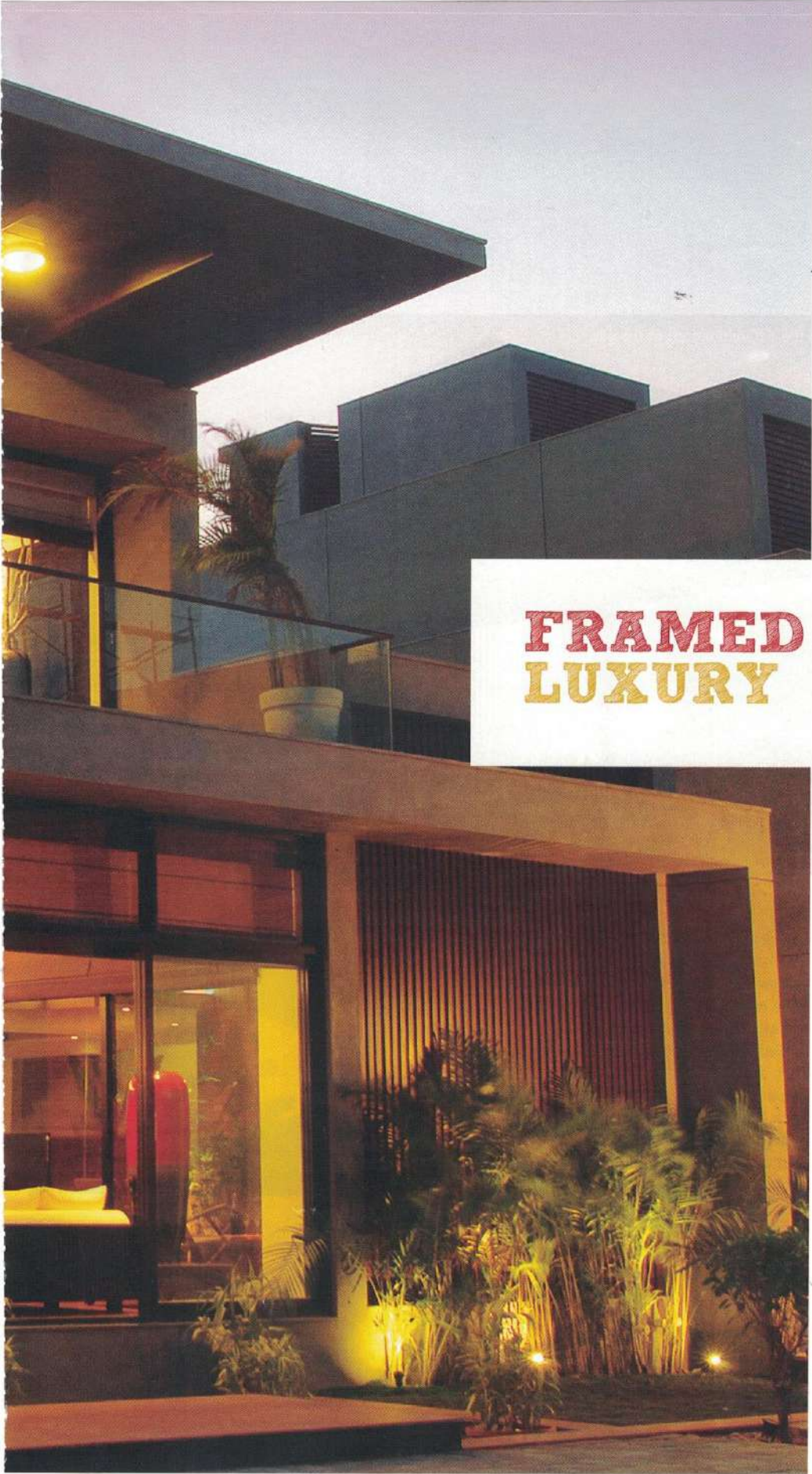
NURU KARIM
MY SPACE

THE RABBIT HOLE

ARCHITECT BART LENS' BRILLIANCE IN BRICK



The longer walls of the house are so treated that there is complete privacy from the adjacent residences.



FRAMED LUXURY

Architect Ishwar Gehi designs a weekend leisure complex on the outskirts of Rajkot which promises a high degree of relaxation within a framework of serene opulence. Sharp lines, rich detailing, mood lighting and a discreet décor theme help him achieve this goal.

As more and more members of modern families adopt the mantle of 'breadwinner' it is seen that they are invariably pre-occupied with their hectic schedules throughout the week. Enjoying some downtime over the weekends then becomes very essential. If this again can be done with the entire family it is doubly precious.

To satiate this desire for a calm and peaceful retreat for the dwellers of the bustling and colourful city of Rajkot, the vision of Mr. Amish Thakrar and the skills of architect Ishwar Gehi were collectively employed to create the project named 'Belle Vista'.

Text By Kruti Choksi
Photographs Nirmal Masurekar

The courtyard adjacent to the living area helps bring in the different moods of the day.



Located on the outskirts of the city, close to a natural water body, Belle Vista is a cluster of twenty-nine weekend retreats. "The most striking feature of the overall design scheme of the retreat is the implementation of controlled proportions. They are soothing to the senses and have helped generate an understated elegance. Each house is perceived through intersecting frames and a play of volumes that creates an interesting massing," explains Gehi.

This is taken a step forward with the clever use of a composite construction of metal beams and an RCC slab for the upper floor roofing; large overhangs shade the balconies efficiently from both rain and sun. Moreover the longer walls are so designed that complete privacy from adjacent residences is guaranteed. Like all his projects, this one too highlights a high degree of design sophistication.

The open plan of the residence abolishes the need of partition walls that normally segregate living, dining and kitchen spaces. It is visually connected and yet demarcated through subtle gestures. "We wanted the lady of the house or anybody else who happened to be cooking to be a part of the other activities taking place in the living and dining areas. The person occupied in the kitchen should not feel left out, especially over a weekend out with the family!" shares Mr. Amish Thakrar.

As Gehi designs the interiors of a sample residence, he abhors an adherence to any heavy or ornamental style of décor. He truly understands that today's trendy urban families prefer a well knitted and easily manageable space that reflects both their modern life-style and Indian attitude.

With the quest at hand that required being truly synonymous with the needs and personalities of his faceless clients, Gehi keeps the décor simple, clean and neat.



The décor of the master bedroom is subtle and graciously frill-free.



Almost each space of the house gets an opportunity to peep into the courtyard.



There is no ostentation. It is just sober sophistication that comes through via the juxtaposition of the carefully selected design and artefacts. Every chair in the house ensures that you are in a posture that reminds you of being on holiday.

The internal courtyard derived from the margin space is treated to offer a wooden island deck amidst a water body. Plants like the Lucky Bamboo, the Buddha Belly Bamboo, the Golden Bamboo and Frangipani trees add the desired green touch against the red of the exposed brick wall which is adorned with metal butterflies. The feather in the cap is provided by the frictionless swing and reclining wooden chairs that can trick one into believing he is at a resort. **The compact open-to-sky courtyard undoubtedly acts as the heart of the retreat!** Almost all the spaces of the house peep into this courtyard.

The living room with its completely see-through glass facades both between the exteriors and the internal courtyard give the perfect feeling of being outside even when inside. The tight margin space adjacent to the dining space takes the shape of a lily pond with an intricately crafted metal sculpture of a lily plant standing in the water.

“The use of exposed concrete, brick and wood gives a soft feel to the otherwise bold composition,” shares Gehi. The tactful use of glass, conversion of margin spaces into courtyards and the overall neutral palette enhances the openness.



The very first step inside the house is akin to entering a fantasy world that is crafted with great intricacy. There is a certain tranquillity that comes through seamlessly. The ambience radiates cosiness without loosening its grip on the feeling of opulence. Well what more could one ask for from a weekend treat or retreat!

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