

# Inside Outside

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## FEATURING

S A K Designs  
Madhuri and Sagar Zite  
Jibu John • Arthur Casas  
Nupur Madhav • Ishwar Gehi  
And an Indian home in Vietnam

## COVER STORY

Architect Rakeshh Jeswaani designs a duplex apartment in South Mumbai.



# Retreat, rest, relax and rejuvenate



Belle Vista is designed to promise resort-like rejuvenation and relaxation within the comfort and privacy of one's opulent yet calm home.

TEXT: KRUTI CHOKSI KOTHARI PHOTOGRAPHS: NIRMAL MASUREKAR, COURTESY THE ARCHITECT

Lifestyles within the luxuries of urbanisation rarely come without their drawbacks. One deals with domestic staffing issues, traffic, bringing up kids and even with elderly parents. Every individual of the family follows a hectic schedule throughout the week. In such a demanding scenario, the need for a break from the chaos of the city is inevitable. And that's where Belle Vista residential comes in.

With its weekend retreat, Belle Vista aims at providing an opulent den where the family can cuddle up in tranquillity, away from the polluted and crowded city. This would not only soothe and pacify the tired soul but also give an opportunity for the family to stay united and spend some quality time together, re-enforcing the Indian ethos.

The scheme is planned with the concept of living within a well integrated community. There are no dividing compound walls to segregate the individual residential units. The parking space of each unit is provided at the road level.





Architect Ishwar Gehi.



#### FACT FILE

SITE AREA  
14,490 Sq Yd

SITE LOCATION  
Rajkot, Gujarat, India

BUILT UP AREA OF CLUBHOUSE  
10,500 Sq Ft

BUILT UP AREA OF EACH UNIT  
2600 Sq Ft

BUILDER  
Amish Thakrar

PRINCIPAL ARCHITECT  
Ar. Ishwar Gehi

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER  
Manish Doshi

INTERIOR DESIGNER OF CLUBHOUSE  
Ar. Ishwar Gehi

INTERIOR DESIGNER OF  
RESIDENTIAL UNIT  
Ar. Ishwar Gehi  
(for sample bungalow)

LANDSCAPE DESIGNER  
Ar. Ishwar Gehi

YEAR OF COMPLETION  
2013



The residential unit has an open plan devoid of rigid partition walls for the family spaces. Visual connectivity is maintained while demarcating the zones with subtle gestures.

Strategically located pockets of well manicured greens lead to an overall balanced and serene ambience.

The residential unit has an open plan devoid of rigid partition walls for the family spaces like the living and dining rooms and the kitchen. Visual connectivity is maintained while demarcating the zones with subtle gestures. 'I wanted the lady of the house to be a part of the other activities happening in the living and dining spaces even while she is cooking,' explains Ishwar Gehi, architect.

The tight margin space adjacent to the dining room takes the shape of a contemporary lily pond wherein an intricately crafted metal sculpture of a lily plant is placed in the water. The living room, with its transparent glass façades towards the road, as well as the internal courtyard, gives the feeling of being outside even when one is inside.

The heart of the house is the open-to-sky courtyard, adjacent to the living room. Guarded by high walls, the private court offers a wooden island deck amidst the water body. The red exposed brick wall is invigorated with metal motifs of butterflies and dramatised against the green of





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plants like lucky bamboo, Buddha belly bamboo, golden bamboo and frangipani trees. The cherries on the cake are the frictionless custom-designed swing and reclining wooden chairs, truly reflecting the resort theme.

When the inherent design is derived from the implementation of controlled proportions and a rich material palette, there is hardly any scope for cosmetic surface ornamentations. An understated elegance is perceived through enticing frames of vision and internal play of volumes resulting in interesting massing for the external façade. This is taken a step forward with the use of a composite construction of metal beams and RCC slab for the upper floor roofing with large overhangs shading the balconies. Moreover, the external longer walls are so designed that complete privacy from adjacent residences is guaranteed.

The interior décor gels with the architectural vocabulary. There is no gaudy décor. The absence of ostentation is the key to elegance here. In the quest for creating manageable yet voguish interiors that would appeal to an urban family, the furniture is selected to be simple yet functional. An occasional splash of vibrant red or blue on the walls fills the space with zeal and youthfulness.

But if we are talking about resort-like living, how can one





The heart of the house is the open-to-sky courtyard. The court offers a wooden island deck amidst the water body. The red exposed brick wall is invigorated with metal motifs of butterflies and dramatised against the greenery.

afford to miss out on the quintessential amenities? To facilitate recreation and community gatherings, a state-of-the-art clubhouse is worked up. The ground floor accommodates the reception, waiting lounge, gymnasium, spa, games zone, kids' theatre along with the office blocks. The first floor is occupied by a quirky coffee bar, discotheque, theatre and informal open-to-sky sit outs.

The clubhouse with its distinctive architectural vocabulary is crafted from an interesting juxtaposition of various cubical forms conjuring a harmonious whole. With minimal ornamentation, the façade is accentuated with glass and wood to yield a novel visual composition. The solid surfaces in concrete finish and the bold column-free cantilevering projection create a well balanced modern structure. The central cubical form on the first floor is floating on the steel structure of girders. The two free standing poles, flanked on the two extremes at the ground floor, eventually support the RCC pergolas on the first floor, which houses an informal coffee bar.

The entire building is lifted on the wooden deck to render an illusion of suspension above the ground. The interiors too are crafted from a similar wooden palette to carry forward the rustic appeal. Cut-outs in the wooden



clubhouse



A tranquilising sculpture of Buddha at the periphery of a step garden.



A huge mirror casually enlarges the bathroom.

deck give way to water spouts in a geometric fashion. The central larger water pool leads to a water slit forming a waterfall that culminates in the sunken step garden. A tranquilising sculpture of Buddha at the centre of the periphery of this step garden completes the overall view.

At twilight as the twinkling lights cast their glow, the reflections of the clubhouse in the calm waters create illusions of the oneiric world. Belle Vista is truly a cosy leisure pleasure retreat that combines the comfort of modern design with the richness of traditional elements – an ideal getaway from the hustle and bustle of daily living. 