

ARCHITECT and INTERIORS INDIA

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Feature

Tall Structures

Trend

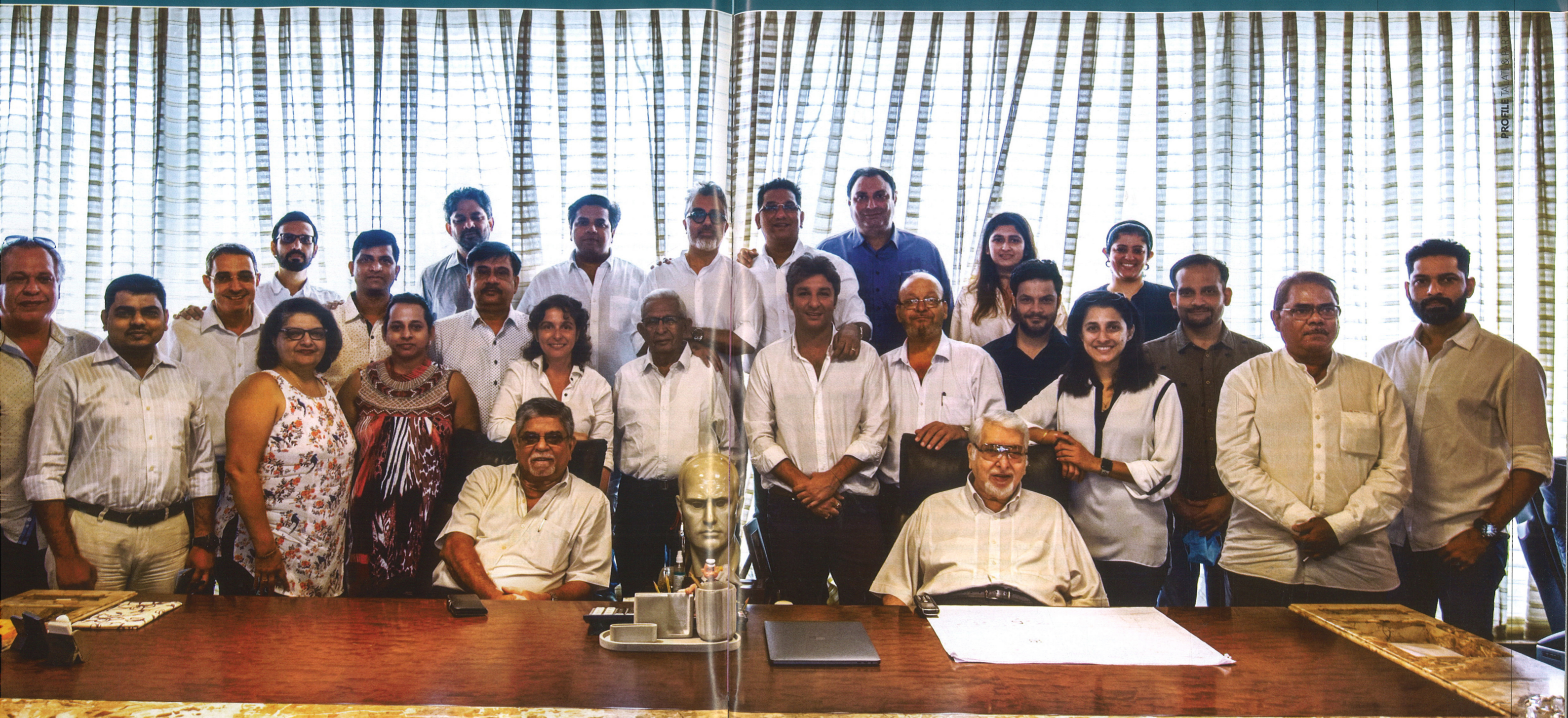
Office Furniture



L-R: First row - Naushir DeVitre, Nashir Talati; second row - Mayur Doshi, Arshad Dastur, Navy Gandevia, Rio Talati, Anahita Hilloowala, Ahmad Alhadi, Mahyar Vaid; third row - Sameet Thakur, Xerxes Talati, Ratish Patil, and Mayuresh Shirke.

Building on a **LEGACY**

Staying true to the design beliefs that have made it a household name, the newly-branded Talati & Partners – helmed by the veteran original founders and a passionate next generation – is poised to pave a new path



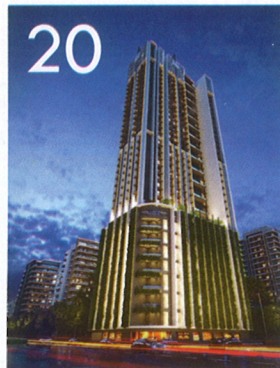
BUILDING ON A LEGACY

STAYING TRUE TO THE DESIGN BELIEFS THAT HAVE MADE IT A HOUSEHOLD NAME, THE NEWLY-BRANDED TALATI & PARTNERS – HELMED BY THE VETERAN ORIGINAL FOUNDERS AND A PASSIONATE NEXT GENERATION – IS POISED TO PAVE A NEW PATH

BY MITALEE KURDEKAR

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OBJECTS OF DESIRE

Recently appointed projects director at boutique interiors agency TwentyOne06, Douglas Drummond heads up workplace design. He lists five of his design favourites from a career spanning more than 15 years working for the likes of Microsoft and Gazprom



in, finally arriving at the design thinking that drives TPA's practice today: to make clean, elegant, detail-oriented and timeless structures.

ENDURE & EVOLVE

Not only is this mantra amply reflected in their minimalistic, yet thoughtful designs, but it has also become TPA's signature leitmotif. It was visible in their maiden architectural project – the landmark Cadbury House at Peddar Road in Mumbai – that opened up multiple avenues for the firm, and it continues to guide their work to this day.

In fact, despite the firm donning a new avatar, it still lives by this core philosophy. Then why change at all, one would question. "Most of the old partners parted ways, leaving room for the next generation to take the helm. Under this fresh and youthful leadership, we will evolve TPA from being one of the country's leading design firms in quality and practical design to also being the country's most evolving and exciting design offices," explains Talati's son Xerxes.

His sister Ria further points out, "Architecture and design should benefit the user, the environment and the community, as well as the fraternity. At Talati & Partners – designers and architects aside, we are a team of different strengths. Our draftsmen, (municipal) coordinators and site supervisors all contribute equally, as does our support staff, who are the backbone of our organisation. The same should be said about all the skilled contractors and their workmen, who help us realise our dreams and turn them into reality. We have always propped up talented workers and contracting teams throughout our history as a company, and hope to continue to do so, thus uplifting the trade & craft and the lives of the workforce's families too."

Recognising excellence in the existing talent pool is vital to the development of any industry as it enables new and creative work to be produced. And this is something that TPA has cultivated with all the team leaders at the firm, thus allowing for fresh young ideas to be voiced and an energetic atmosphere to be created in the office and on site. This, in turn, drives TPA's projects in terms of innovation, while still keeping them under the experienced guidance of their seasoned partners and associate partners.

Highlighting the design-based benefits of this set-up in a

more macro sense, Xerxes adds: "Design in India is unfortunately restricted due to legislation and regulation. However, with more exposure and resources now flooding into the country, the possibilities are endless. With dedication, hard work and innovation, anything is possible. And with a new crop of young designers, who have more to work with than even 10 years ago, the future of design in India is boundless, especially owing to the diversity in this country."

INNOVATION IS KEY

Speaking of diversity, TPA likes to work with a variety of resources and technologies. However, despite using the newest materials, products, processes and software, the firm believes that trends come and go and urges its designers to be creative and innovative, yet stay away from gimmicks, instead working towards a more enduring approach to design. Designers are encouraged to innovate and make use of the unlimited possibilities available to them. "Innovation will make the biggest difference to architecture and design in India," believes Talati.

After all, change is the only constant, as they say. So, whether it is materials, products and technologies utilised in crafting projects, or else the operations of a firm of great stature, innovation and evolution are inevitable. Change, though, must not be feared, but instead welcomed. And when one sees the ease and confidence with which Talati and DeVitre are passing on the baton to the next generation, one has hope for the future of design at the hands of zealous, albeit well-trained professionals.

As for the man who started it all, ask him what he would like to be remembered for, and Talati is quick to say, "Dedication." It's not much of a surprise, given how the master architect has poured his heart and soul into his work over the years, refining not just his craft, but also the skyline of the city he calls home. Not only has he come a long way from being the boy who would admire the Victoria Terminus and its neighbouring edifices, but his story – and that of TPA – could now certainly evoke a similar desire to dream, design and create, whether for the rising talent within TPA or for other undiscovered gems that will eventually design our future cities. Until then, with the repository of sheer talent that is helming affairs at TPA, this legacy appears to be in very safe hands.

3. Innovative thinking – rather than a focus on trends and fads – is what is encouraged at the firm.

Creating an empire is one thing, sustaining it is quite another. And yet, Noshir Talati's name has been synonymous with good design ever since he started his practice in 1964 and it continues to be one of the most recognised names in the industry, even today. This story may have had a modest start with the coming together of Talati and then employee Naushir DeVitre, operating from a tiny 100 sq-ft office in the Fountain area of Mumbai with merely two desks and oodles of passion; however, the rest of the fable is now part of Indian design history.

Although it has been over 50 years, the two visionaries are still partners and, in fact, this year marks the commencement of a new phase in their journey. Taking the company they have so lovingly built and nurtured to the position it holds today, they are now marching into the future with a renewed vision as well as a young, energetic and talented team to fulfil it. With their fundamental philosophy that design is to be simple, elegant and practical, remaining at the centre of the practice; the newly-christened Talati & Partners (TPA) will be led by a robust team of young and flourishing partners and associate partners – Xerxes Talati, Ratish Patil, Ria Talati, Ahmad Alhadi, Mayur Doshi, Arshad Dastur, Navy Gandevia, Anahita Hilloowala, Mahyar Vaid, Sameet Thakur and Mayuresh Shirke – under the venerable guardianship of Noshir Talati and Naushir DeVitre.

PASSIONATE PURSUITS

What unites all the partners – or, for that matter, the entire 300-plus member team – is a mutual passion for the craft, amply resonated across their inspired designs and detailed projects. Of course, this appetite stems from the founding father's own outlook towards the profession, the genesis of which can be traced back to the senior Talati's childhood, spent admiring the magnificence of the Victoria Terminus and walking around the station and streets of Ballard Estate in Mumbai, ardently sketching the vistas of the striking buildings and noticing the details that set them apart.

As a matter of fact, when asked what got him interested

in architecture in the first place, he states emphatically, "I just always knew! I was always inspired by the urban environment around me, ever since I was a young boy, and would walk the streets of Mumbai with my head up to the sky. The beauty and grandeur of the historic buildings fascinated me."

Despite his humble beginnings, he always had an innate passion and talent for space and design, and overcame many financial hardships to pursue his singular passion, ultimately graduating as an architect with honours from Rachana Sansad. After working for a few years, he went on to complete his Master of Architecture degree – with a full scholarship – at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, graduating with the highest possible distinction. Post that, there was no looking back, as a combination of dedication, talent, hard work and good fortune came into play in the making of an illustrious career with DeVitre by his side.

THE MAKING OF MASTERS

"We were so young and all we wanted was to work hard and create. We didn't really envision too much, but to do our work and let it speak for itself. Life and hard work has got us to where we are today," reminisces DeVitre.

It was not always easy, though. "In the beginning, the projects were small and mostly interior projects. A few people gave us a chance and let us show them what we were able to create and deliver. In India, at that time, there was no professionalism either in the trade or with the contractors. That was a challenge, but after a lot of perseverance and finding the correct team, we managed to create work and details never before seen in the city," confesses Talati.

During that time, he never stopped learning, taking inspiration from various iconic structures along the way. Whether it was the Victoria Terminus' ability to serve people on a daily basis, which made him realise very early on that architecture has the power to influence the lives of millions, or the Seagram Building in New York City and the John Hancock Tower in Boston for their perennially classic appeal that set the standard for the modern skyscraper; he took it all



2. TPA's practice is driven by a simple philosophy: to make clean, elegant, detail-oriented and timeless structures.



ASHFORD ROYALE

Yet another masterpiece of architecture by TPA, Ashford Royale is composed of four symmetrical 38-storied towers flanked by double height terraces on either side, creating a systematic rhythm fading into the sky. Another example of where simplicity of crisp lines manifests perfection. The four harmonious towers feel light and airy as they ascend, rather than feeling like a typical blocky and heavyset residential complex.

Ashford Royale has various amenities such as a large state-of-the-art gym, a large events space, and an extensive common outdoor green space that brings the community together and connects the four buildings with various walking paths having gorgeous landscaping and ambient lighting to create a special atmosphere as the sun sets. Ashford Royale's mosaic swimming pool under a curved skylight is something special to behold – and is a grand space that feels open and inviting.

The building plan provides ample parking for the residents on the podium floors, and there are also separate access points for service staff and materials. Even though there are four separate rhythmic buildings, careful attention has been taken to make sure that the complex feels like a community through the planning and shared amenities that flow between the buildings.

PROJECT DETAILS

Name of the project: Ashford Royale

The client: Ashford Group

The designers: Talati & Partners

HVAC design: Birju Patel

Lighting design: Talati & Partners

Area: Approx. 1,00,00,000 sq-ft

Location: Mumbai

Duration of project: 84 months

Year of completion: First and second towers completed in 2017, third tower in 2019, and fourth tower is expected to be completed in 2021



ASHFORD PALAZZO

Even though the sophisticated design language that flows through the house is the same, every room in this house is unique and tells its own story with its art and accessories that have been collected from around the world by the clients. TPA has incorporated these artefacts seamlessly into the design, making the entire house a showpiece for the clients' collection and memories.

While designing this apartment, which boasts a prime South Mumbai location, TPA has been able to create a home for a family with a keen attention to detail combined with the finest craftsmanship and quality. As always, TPA has used a combination of shapes and forms with interesting colours to create a textured and sophisticated interior.

Overall, the house concentrates on a contemporary, straight-lined, strong-formed interior design; speaking volumes of the interests held by the client on a personal level with the creative and elegant use of wood, metal, art and sculpture.

The layout works towards breaking the monotony of a long corridor by bleeding elaborately into the living & entertainment zones of the house, adorned with artwork collected by the clients through their travels. The client loves to unwind while cooking special meals for his family, and TPA incorporated his needs by adding an open, induction wok and grill into a glass clad counter that was specially designed to break the conventional kitchen approach. The bedrooms are a private space to unwind and hold separate dressing areas, leading to the practically-approached, clean-lined, aesthetically-pleasing bathrooms.

There is a separate study area situated outside the house, having a distinct entity; thus ensuring segregation between the client's work and personal space in a warm and refined environment.

PROJECT DETAILS

- Name of the project:** Ashford Palazzo
- The client:** Private client
- The designers:** Talati & Partners
- HVAC design:** Quiet Cool Electronics
- Lighting design:** Talati & Partners
- Area:** 5,500 sq-ft
- Location:** Mumbai
- Duration of project:** 12 months
- Year of completion:** 2019





HOTEL HARBOUR VIEW

Hotel Harbour View is housed in one of Mumbai's Art Deco heritage buildings by the famous sea side of Apollo Bunder, right down the road from The Taj Mahal Palace hotel and the Gateway of India.

Each room of this boutique hotel is a different size and configuration as per the client's requirements, but more interestingly, each room has its own unique ambience with individual colours, wallpapers and themes that were curated specially keeping a one-of-a-kind guest experience in mind. With traditional Art Deco details and lots of eclectic elements brought in, the hotel feels young, fresh and contemporary while being enveloped in a memorable heritage structure. With a smattering of abstract and contemporary prints on the wall, much care has been taken to embellish the rooms and corridors with nuanced sophistication and contemporary elegance. The rooms are designed to pamper one with their calm and harmonious décor, coupled with the soft warm upholstery, giving one a restful sleep before one discovers the city in another light.

The hotel design took its inspiration from the building and

the city's striking Art Deco heritage, honouring many of the existing characteristic details and elements while giving the design a modern and contemporary twist with materials, art and colours. The overall amalgamation of a global contemporary aesthetic with the heritage Art Deco legacy helps create a unique experience in the Maximum City for the hotel's discerning global clientele.

PROJECT DETAILS

Name of the project: Hotel Harbour View

The client: Kerawala family

The designers: Talati & Partners

Lighting design: Talati & Partners

Area: Approx. 7,000 sq-ft

Location: Mumbai

Duration of project: 18 months

Year of completion: 2018





KEY PROJECTS

HOUSE OF VOLUMES

A true sense of strength and sobriety characterises this TPA interior, achieved through a masterful interplay of harmonious volumes and measured lines. Softened by warm cove lighting and authentic classic materials of wood, stone, marble and metal, employed in a gentle balance and unison, this home spells undeniable luxury. Boasting a spectacular wine room that fluidly curves around a tasting table, the owners can easily access and enjoy their fabulous vintage collection. The expansive living area feels exceptionally grand with large plush sofas and admirable art pieces housed in a double height space, forming impressive volumes that connect the two levels via an enchanting organic staircase. The stairway is designed to feel open and light – even though the space allocated was a tight one – with cool grey cantilevered steps and concealed lighting below each step illuminating the staircase as it rises. The beautifully curved delicate handrails of the stairway act as a sculpture in themselves, adding to the resplendence of the space.

The warmth and elegance of the home is evident to any-

one who enters. Additionally, there is an exquisite terrace on the upper floor of the duplex, where the family can relax and take in the views of the city while stylishly swimming in a glass-edged pool under the leaves of a green wall and transplanted frangipani trees. The lighting on the terrace is also soft and indirect so as to create a warm ambience and form a true oasis in the bustling city.

PROJECT DETAILS

Name of the project: House of Volumes

The designers: Talati & Partners

HVAC design: Birju Patel

Lighting design: Talati & Partners

Area: Approx. 18,000 sq-ft

Location: Mumbai

Duration of project: 42 months

Year of completion: 2019



SHANDILYA TERRACE

This graceful building on the sea is designed with TPA's signature, clean horizontal lines, wherein the vertical elements are seen rising together in rhythmic harmony, in turn reflecting the company's belief in a refined and no fuss architecture.

Towering over the Mumbai skyline, providing gorgeous views of the sea and the sea link, apartments in Shandilya are spacious and all rooms have a great view. Each apartment is planned (with the common areas) in a T-shape, bringing maximum light and ventilation into the flat, while maintaining an open flowing space that is unique in the dense financial capital. The planning took a considerable amount of time as each space has been well thought out with large bedrooms, lots of storage and spacious bathrooms. Most of the flats are duplexes with grand double height living rooms that lead out onto a wooden deck offering endless views of the sea.

The rhythmic lines of the building are simple and elegant, crafted in a sophisticated two-toned pattern as the build-

ing stands out, yet also blends in – a reflection of its subtle sophistication.

TPA's mark of cool and clean lines are amply showcased in this elegant building, something that promises to make it an iconic tower dotting the skyline of Mumbai.

PROJECT DETAILS

Name of the project: Shandilya Terrace

The client: Talati Development

The designers: Talati & Partners

HVAC design: Quiet Cool Electronics

Lighting design: Talati & Partners

Area: Approx. 2,25,000 sq-ft

Location: Mumbai

Duration of project: 60 months

Year of completion: 2020



BANK STREET RESTAURANTS

A private lifestyle club, Bank Street is a gorgeous 5-floor heritage building right in the middle of Mumbai's historic Fort area.

The project has been designed in a way that art, lifestyle, music and culinary delight come together in a sophisticated but exciting, multilayered space, where the members can unwind, entertain and just have fun.

When one enters the space, one is greeted by a majestic atrium, serving as a grandiose entrance area to welcome the distinguished members into the luxurious club, with its connected floors making it feel like a grand old mansion. The atrium is over 38 ft high with large windows and a magnificent staircase made with recaptured wood, providing an entirely modern, minimalist ambience in contrast with the heritage façade. The beauty and legacy of this building is not forgotten, but celebrated and complemented with dazzling modern spaces that honour the historical heritage through delicate detailing and a measured choice of timeless materials.

There is a young, contemporary bar & café on the ground floor that transforms into a happening night club post 7 pm, and a pan Asian restaurant on the first floor with all the warmth of rock-faced Indian stones, rich walnut counters and slate flooring. The second floor houses a fine dine French restaurant revolving around the concept of 'circle of friends', incorporating large circular lounge banquette seating.

The third floor houses a lavish and sophisticated banquet area called Q, which will be segmented into three different zones but can also be amalgamated into one large banquet space, providing some much-needed flexibility. Q incorporates a large 20-seater conference room during daytime and, at night, this can be converted into a fine dine dinner table for private functions and ritzy corporate dinners as

PROJECT DETAILS

Name of the project: Bank Street Restaurants

The designers: Talati & Partners

HVAC design: Clancy Global

Lighting design: Talati & Partners

Area: Approx. 30,000 sq-ft

Location: Mumbai

Duration of project: 15 months

Status: Ongoing

it has a large service area to be able to support all types of operations as desired by the member. The seamless sliding folding partitions that disappear, incorporate acoustical requirements that can really make the divided spaces entirely private. The space will also have beautiful matt gold chandeliers, veneer ceilings and bronze tinted mirrors, affording an ambience of beauty and grandeur. Q also includes a holding space for 30 people at the entry point, as a staging area before the event/ banquet starts. All the practical requirements have been thoroughly considered while designing this sophisticated, opulent and flexible space to have it function seamlessly.

All the spaces are muted and sophisticated but have a modern flair and charm to them – a member and their guests will feel like they are mingling in an exquisite lush living room in someone's magnificent home, enjoying cocktails and canapés while swaying to alluring music. This balance between a commercial space and a home-like setting is what is most fascinating about the project.



AVIGHNA HEADQUARTERS

Avighna Headquarters is a building that has an elegant vertical rhythm of alternating glass and beige stone, delicately rising through the building. Having said that, this building is also unique because it has many planes that make it look different from various angles – enhanced by the corner flower beds on the lower floors and also by its staircase core that skilfully cuts through the building, creating compelling structural perspectives.

Special attention is given to security, with a double core planned for executives and a separate one for staff and services. Efficient circulation, a spacious lobby and office spaces designed to enjoy maximum light, make these corporate towers a desirable location for any prospective purchaser.

The minimal, yet elegant spaces have been designed for flexibility and openness, keeping in mind the comfort of the end users. The circulation allows for maximum efficiency and fosters collaboration with open plan work-

PROJECT DETAILS

Name of the project: Avighna Headquarters

The client: Avighna Group

The designers: Talati & Partners

HVAC design: Bijo Jose from MEP Consulting Engineers

Lighting design: Sandeep Adagale from LDS

Area: Approx. 2,00,000 sq-ft

Location: Mumbai

Status: Ongoing

spaces incorporated. The large open spaces were designed during the planning stage, thus ensuring maximum flexibility for the users – as TPA recognises that flexibility is an essential requirement, especially in the world we live in today.



A TOWERING TALE

On a highly coveted corner plot at Worli Sea Face, this towering residential building will have unmatched views of the city – both north and south – and the architecture and planning takes full advantage of this.

The podium levels are curved to flow with the plot shape, making space for an organic hanging garden that can be enjoyed by residents in addition to a total sea view. This curved section also provides the building with ample parking and amenity space that the residents of this plush building can enjoy.

Taking from the basic tenet of Talati & Partners, the main building has clean and simple lines and is an elegant structure that rises with a balanced cadence of horizontal and vertical lines. It is divided into three distinct sections that break the rhythm of the horizontal lines into distinct sections, while still connecting the elevation with a pattern.

This building looks like it is encased within two large white frames that boldly rise and wrap around the structure,

PROJECT DETAILS

Name of the project: A Towering Tale

The client: Shree Naman Group

The designers: Talati & Partners

Lighting design: Talati & Partners

Location: Mumbai

Status: Ongoing

giving it a well-defined vertical movement.

The first few levels with podium parking have inset windows with flowing flower beds that make the towering building appear like a green oasis as passers-by look on, and especially when coupled with the protruding, rounded hanging garden, make it a unique and beautiful addition to the city's skyline. 