

# SO CHOCOLATEY!

This coffee-toned Ambala home by Renesa Design Studio is a marriage of Japandi and India Modern styles

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Japandi and India Modern styles meet in the living room, each taking turns to bask in the spotlight

The facade is a brown and beige confection with alternately protruding and sunken window frames



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cinnamon-speckled stairway. Eclair-like pillars. Decadent chocolate-slab walls that melt away into oblivion. These are the things that define this residence in Ambala. And yet, the home's gastronomic allusions aren't the only things worth noting. Its volumes rise and fall and rise again, in big brutalist sweeps, signalling something new around every corner. "By incorporating a sense of architectural movement, we wanted to inspire a spirit of homeliness and have the home hold a mirror to its evolving inhabitants," says Sanjay Arora, one half of father-and-son architecture and interior design consultancy Renesa Design Studio, who was tasked with designing the home for a family of four along with the firm's other half, Sanchit.

Father and son conceived the home like a carefully orchestrated composition. "Each piece was chosen following multiple 3D mock-ups and true-to-life samples," says Sanchit. And yet, nothing inside seems premeditated. The interior is an elegant confluence of Japandi and India Modern styles, where wabi-sabi surfaces underpin gleaming brass lamps, and Rajasthani paintings on one wall act as a foil for understated artworks on another. Equally, the furniture scheme is dominated by earthy tones and textures, with pale wood grains juxtaposed against natural cane textures and greige upholstery elevating clean-cut timber frames.

The rusticity of the interior is echoed in the facade, where alternately protruding and sunken window frames conjure a curious tapestry. In an attempt to differentiate the architectural typology from that of its neighbours, the architects employed a harmonious interplay of undulating curves and straight lines to create a captivating visual contrast. As for the palette, they employed a combination of mocha and milk, using one to offset the other in a bid to make the exterior features pop. "At first, the choice of colours seems immediately attention-worthy, but as the eyes adjust to the textural nuances, the facade demands a deeper exploration," says Sanjay.

As the architects recall, the challenges faced were many. For one, honouring vastu meant laying down the blueprint in a way they wouldn't have otherwise. "The principles necessitated vertical segregation in the planning. To complicate things, the elevated water table in the vicinity posed a significant hurdle, with neighbouring homes experiencing dampness-related concerns," recalls Sanchit. Luckily, it wasn't anything the pair wasn't prepared to tackle head-on. A series of thoughtful architectural interventions later, they found their middle ground.

It would be fair to say that the home upends convention in more ways than one. "It sits at the intersection of modern and traditional. Rooted in Indian values, yet defined by contemporary sensibilities, it is emblematic of a family moving into a new era while staying true to its roots," Sanchit finishes. ♦ [studiorenesa.com](http://studiorenesa.com)



Diaphanous curtains sit like divine veils around the dining room, inviting golden light throughout the day



Black-and-white photographs, a burnished brass urn, a low wooden bench—the spirit of the home, slow and peaceful, is fittingly captured in this vignette

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